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Colorado VRM Program

by Wirth and Associates

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METHODOLOGY

OVERVIEW

The basic sequential steps involved in the inventory of Scenic Quality, Visual Sensitivity and Distance Zones are outlined as follows:

SCENIC QUALITY

1. Determine and map Scenic Quality Rating Units (SQRU)
2. Rate and document scenic quality levels
3. Rate and document man-made (cultural) landscape modifications

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

1. Determine important viewer locations (Key Observer Points - KOPs)
2. Determine the land that can be seen from the KOP (seen area analysis)
3. Map use volume levels for KOPs within the seen area
4. Determine user attitudes toward man-made landscape modifications
5. Determine final sensitivity levels based on a combination of use volume and user attitudes

DISTANCE ZONES

1. Determine KOPs (as above)
2. Determine seen area from KOPs } why different from above
3. Map distance zones within the seen area

A two-phase approach to the inventory of visual resources was developed and used in this study. The first phase involved preliminary mapping in the office. The second phase was done in the field and involved confirmation of preliminary mapping, actual field inventory and follow-up management review of field results.

Phase One involved the following basic steps:

A. Preliminary determination of Scenic Quality Rating Units (SQRU) in the office from topographic and geologic maps and aerial photographs.

B. Determination of KOPs in the office from BLM and other agency data.

C. Preliminary determination of the seen area from KOPs.

D. Mapping use volume levels of KOPs.

E. Preliminary mapping of Distance Zones from KOPs.

Phase Two involved the following basic steps:

A. Field verification of SQRU boundaries and scenic quality rating.

B. Field identification and rating of cultural modifications.

C. Field verification of seen area and distance zones.

D. Overflight and ground reconnaissance by the Project Director and Project Manager to review field inventory results.

E. Workshop session(s) with selected public and agency representatives to determine user attitudes toward visual change in the landscape.

F. Determination of final sensitivity levels based on user volume and user attitudes.

This two phase approach was devised and utilized for efficiency in completing the inventory portion within the short time alloted for each planning unit. (Specifically, field team members had a preliminary indication of rating units and zones to react to, rather than having to start from a blank base map in the field). It also built in a series of checks and reviews by both management and field team personnel since all areas were reviewed on three occasions preliminary office evaluation, field inventory, and field review.

Scenic Quality

OVERVIEW

The analysis of a landscape's "scenic quality" requires a number of methodological and procedural decisions. Early in these decisions is establishing the rating unit and thereby defining the scale of analysis and the physical size of each area (or unit) to be field checked. These decisions are subjective but not arbitrary and during field inspection are refined as needed.

After each rating unit has been field checked, several categories or "general types" of rating units emerge within each planning unit. The general types provide an indication of the diversity of the landscape within each planning unit and serve as a guide to that unit's landscape character.

Man-made alterations to the natural landscape are either "cultural intrusions" or "modifications." These alterations become visual attractions or detract from the landscape and consist of a wide range of items and scales.

The scenic quality rating based on subjective data becomes a relative indicato of the landscape's visual quality. The data used was formulated by the BLM and outlined in their manual (8411) on the subject.

These elements: SQRU Criteria; SQRU Classification; Cultural Modification Criteria; and Scenic Quality Rating Criteria make up the methodological and procedural components of Scenic Quality. Detailed sections of each element follow.

SCENIC QUALITY RATING UNIT CRITERIA

The Scenic Quality Rating Units (SQRU) were defined by a three-step process which entailed: 1) predelineation of units, 2) aerial verification, and 3) field refinement and final delineation.

Within each of the steps the rating units were further refined to reflect their physical boundaries from the following criteria:

1. Predelineation of Units - The data collection areas were first defined by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Resource Areas and Planning Units. From these planning boundaries initial rating units were drawn using guidelines supplied in the BLM Manual 8411, "Upland Visual Resource Inventory and Evaluation", and a series of maps including topographic maps (generally 1:50,000 scale USGS county series) geologic maps, relief maps, and aerial photographic quadrangles. The key element in establishing rating units was discerning areas of physiographic integrity; where physical size became unimportant and gave way to defining areas of similar scenic quality. These definitions required careful analysis of scale and visibility, a difficult requirement to meet from map study alone, and lead to both our second and third steps.

2. Field Refinement and Delineation - Using topographic field maps with the refined rating units drawn on them, the scenic quality inter-disciplinary study team drove through the planning unit first to become familiar with the general area, then specifically into each rating unit for the purpose of rating its scenic quality. During

these trips the units were analyzed by the team and considerations of scale and visibility were decided using input from the aerial observation and points of observation in the field. On some occasions members of the local BLM office traveled with our team and contributed to this effort. Very occasionally certain SQRU could not be entered; generally they were enclosed by locked gates, or were primitive areas without access. In these unusual circumstances the team attempted to gain visual access from adjacent areas and relied on aerial observations, aerial photographs and topographic maps to define the rating unit.

3. Field Verification - A management team (usually the Project Director and Project Manager) conducted low altitude flights and ground reconnaissance over all of the Resource Areas with a two-fold objective: 1) to review field inventory results (boundaries and ratings) and, 2) to become personally familiar with the Resource Area prior to conducting a visual sensitivity workshop.

SCENIC QUALITY RATING UNIT CLASSIFICATION

The various Scenic Quality Rating Units found within the North Park Planning Unit each fall into one of nine general landscape types. These general types of landscapes have been defined physiographically based upon field observations, and information available on contour and geologic maps and aerial photographs.

The nine landscape types which have been defined include mountains, ridges, rolling hills, basins, broad valleys, river valleys, sand dunes, and alluvial floodplains. Following are brief narrative descriptions of the landscape types found within the planning unit.

Mountains within the study area are characterized by moderate to steeply sloping land at higher elevations. These lands within the planning unit make up the intermediate slopes below the more dramatic alpine peaks. As such, these lands are relatively smooth in form containing many broad "U" shaped valleys as a result of the many drainages. There are several lesser mountains of volcanic origin which are isolated and independent from the main ranges. These isolated peaks rise somewhat dramatically above rolling hills and parklands at their base. Vegetation consists of mixed alpine conifers and aspen which vary in density and pattern due to slope and aspect. Some lesser mountains also contain a variety of vegetative types which include grass and sagelands on the lower slopes. These two vegetative associations intermix with, and become dominated by aspen/conifer association at higher elevations. There are many mountain lakes situated throughout this environment as a result of past glaciation.

There are several ridges within the study area. These areas are characteristically single independent and isolated ridges, rather than a repeating ridge-valley landscape. These isolated ridges have steep to moderate, semi-uniform slopes with some rock outcrops. Vegetation varies with elevation. Conifers and aspen in varying densities are restricted to higher elevations in or near mountainous terrain, while grass and sagelands are primarily found at lower elevations as is the case of Owl Ridge which bisects North Park in the interior.

Areas of land with rounded topography have been classified as rolling hills. There are basically two types of rolling hills (upland and lowland) which are differentiated, primarily due to elevation. The upland rolling hill environments situated near or at the base of the mountain ranges have a variety of

vegetative types expressed in interesting forms, textures and patterns. Random patterns of aspens and mixed conifers are typical along the hillsides, while the small valleys between hills, contain small water features in the form of ponds and intermittent streams. Vegetation is diverse within these wetter valley floors.

The lowland rolling hills are similar in topography to the upland rolling hill landscape, the primary difference being the uniformity of the sage or grassland vegetation in lowland areas. Due to the low profile of the vegetative types, views are generally more expansive within this lowland rolling hill landscape.

Broad valleys were considered to be wide open expanses of relatively flat to gently sloping land which is bounded by ranges of hills or mountains. These areas are commonly covered by thick deposits of sediments which originated in the surrounding mountains. Agricultural land use is common within these valleys, which take water from the many small streams found in this landscape. Vegetation is somewhat diverse along the stream courses providing interesting patterns, textures, and colors to the area. These areas also contain a number of lakes as is the situation within the Lake John unit (016).

Basins are generally characterized by vast, flat to very gently rolling landscapes with vegetation consisting of sage and grasses typical of the parkland. Willows and other shrubs occur in the wetter areas around the many small ponds, creeks and streams. These lands are primarily situated in the interior of the park. Portions of the Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge fall under this landscape type.

In the dry landscape of northern Colorado, a major river is an important and dominant scenic resource and can be managed more efficiently as a unit unto itself rather than as a component of a larger unit such as a broad valley or an area of rolling hills. For this reason, lands associated with a major river course were singled out and classified as a river valley. Vegetation is most diverse within these valleys as a result of the dominant water features. Agricultural activities are common, taking advantage of the water supply and flat valley floor.

Major water bodies in the form of reservoirs were singled out for the same reasons as were major river valleys. These areas are commonly used heavily for recreational purposes. Walden Reservoir is the major reservoir within the planning unit. Situated west of Walden, it is surrounded by flat to gently sloping sage and grassland typical of the interior of the park.

Unit 016, Lake John, contains a number of lakes used heavily for recreation. These could have been broken out into individual units based on the preceeding premise. Due to the total abundance of water features in the form of creeks, streams, and lakes within the unit, the interrelationship of these features to landform and vegetation created a unit with similar visual experiences throughout. For this reason, the area was not subdivided into many smaller units.

There are several flat expansive areas of land which are situated adjacent to, and above the major river corridors. These areas have been termed Alluvial Floodplains. In a general sense, these extensive lands in combination

with the immediate river valleys could have been classified as a broad valley. Due to the different visual experiences of these two units, and because management considerations would vary greatly between these two landscapes, they were differentiated as character types. Vegetation consists primarily of grass and sagelands used for grazing.

The North and East Sand Hills are isolated features located at the western base of the Medicine Bow Mountains. They are shifting dunes of gently rolling, light yellow sands. The sand dunes lack any vegetative cover other than scattered tufts of tall grasses.

There are a number of unit that could be considered to fit more than one category. An example would be a rating unit composed of rolling hills and many lesser river valleys; this unit could be considered as either "rolling hills" or "river valleys." SQRU's were classified by the most characteristic physiographic feature; therefore, an area of many rolling hills and a few lesser rivers or streams could be typed as rolling hills.

The classification of SQRU by general types has been provided to give some indication of the diversity of the landscape within the planning unit.

CULTURAL MODIFICATION CRITERIA

Using the criteria prescribed in Section 24 of the BLM's Manual 8411 - "Upland Visual Resource Inventory and Evaluation," the field team conducted an inventory of significant cultural modifications found within the Scenic Quality Rating

Units. These modifications were then evaluated in regard to their overall ef on the visual quality of the landscape.

Cultural modifications can take the form of either visual intrusions or visual improvements. For purposes of this study the cultural modifications which were documented were those which were judged by the members of the field team to be visual intrusions, or adverse impacts upon the area's inherent scenic quality.

The specific cultural modifications which were singled out for documentation were those which strongly attracted attention or tended to become a dominant feature in the landscape. These conditions were defined in terms of the severity with which the particular modification contrasted with the natural components of the surrounding landscape. Changes in landform, water, or vegetation and the addition of structures were examined to determine the extent to which they contrasted with the basic form, line, color, and texture characteristic of the rating unit. If the overall contrast was considered to be significant, the modification was photographed, plotted on a map, and rated on the Cultural Modification Field Form.

The question of whether or not to document a cultural modification as a visual intrusion was also influenced by proximity to developed areas and the modifications scale, or size, within the SQRU as a whole.

When a particular land use or cultural modification (which would ordinarily be classified as a visual intrusion on the basis of its visual contrast) was located in an area strongly dominated by the influence of development, it wa not documented as a visual intrusion and was considered to be part of the

developed area. Trailer parks located on the outskirts of an urban area, for example, were not singled out though trailer parks in an area relatively free of development would have been.

In areas which were free of the overbearing visual influence of an urban development, scale was the factor which was used to determine which cultural modifications would be documented. Generally, large scale features were singled out while small-scale features were not. By way of example, fences were not documented though transmission lines were. Billboards weren't considered though junk yards were. The decision was highly subjective but not arbitrary.

General Types

As mentioned, the field team was oriented toward documenting cultural modifications which created strong contrasts with the natural elements of the landscape. A general listing of the cultural modifications noted within the planning unit would include the following:

1) Underground and surface coal mines, both active and inactive;

2) Oil and gas field developments, including drilling and pumping sites, storage tanks, and field camp buildings and storage yards;

3) Major transmission line towers crossing exposed parklands or cuts through wooded slopes for tower construction and maintenance roads;

4) Unscreened transmission substations.

Specific cultural intrusions and locations are described on the "Field Form for Modification Inventory and Feature Contrast Score."

SCENIC QUALITY RATING CRITERIA

The scenic quality rating is a relative indication of the visual quality of the landscape based on a systematic approach and analysis of the landscape elements. Considered are the physical landscape components of landform, vegetation, water and color; the relative scarcity or uniqueness of that particular landscape within the region; the extent to which it has been altered by man and the degree to which lands in adjacent rating units enhance its overall visual quality. Each rating criteria receives a score according to established methodology as shown in Figure 1 taken from the BLM 8411 manual. The combined numerical total then determines one of three levels (A, B & C) of scenic quality.

Ratings were done within the context of the Southern Rocky Mountains and Wyoming Basin physiographic provinces.

SCENIC QUALITY
INVENTORY AND EVALUATION CHART

key factors	rating criteria and score		
landform	High vertical relief as expressed in prominent cliffs, spires or massive rock outcrops, or severe surface variation or highly eroded formations including major badlands or dune systems; or detail features dominant and exceptionally striking and intriguing such as glaciers. 5	Steep canyons, mesas, buttes, cinder cones and drumlins; or interesting erosional patterns or variety in size and shape of landforms; or detail features present and interesting though not dominant or exceptional. 3	low, rolling hills, foothills or flat valley bottoms. Interesting detail landscape features few or lacking. 1
vegetation	A variety of vegetative types as expressed in interesting forms, textures, and patterns. 5	Some variety of vegetation, but only one or two major types. 3	Little or no variety or contrast in vegetation. 1
water	Clear and clean appearing, still, cascading white water, any of which are a dominant factor in the landscape. 5	Flowing, or still, but not dominant in the landscape. 3	Absent, or present, but not noticeable. 0
color	Rich color combinations, variety or vivid color; or pleasing contrasts in the soil, rock, vegetation, water or snow fields. 5	Some intensity or variety in colors and contrast of the soil, rock and vegetation, but not a dominant scenic element. 3	Subtle color variations, contrast or interest; generally mute tones. 1
influence of adjacent scenery	Adjacent scenery greatly enhances visual quality. 5	Adjacent scenery moderately enhances overall visual quality. 3	Adjacent scenery has little or no influence on overall visual quality. 0
scarcity	One of a kind; or unusually memorable, or very rare within region. Consistent chance for exceptional wildlife or wildflower viewing, etc. 6	Distinctive, though somewhat similar to others within the region. 2	Interesting within its setting, but fairly common within the region. 1
cultural modifications	Free from aesthetically undesirable or discordant sights and influences; or modifications add favorably to visual variety. 2	Scenic quality is somewhat depreciated by inharmonious intrusions, but not so extensive that the scenic qualities are entirely negated or modifications add little or no visual variety to the area. 0	Modifications are so extensive that scenic qualities are for the most part nullified or substantially reduced. -4

SCENI
QUALI
A = 19-
B = 12-
C = 0-

FIGURE 1

VISUAL SENSITIVITY

CRITERIA

The criteria and procedure used for determining visual sensitivity are those set forth in BLM's 8411 manual. Basically, this involves a two-part inventory and evaluation process consisting of: 1) determination of user volume and, 2) user attitudes toward change in the landscape. The results of these two independent analyses are combined according to established procedures and result in a determination of final visual sensitivity levels.

USE VOLUME

The collection of use volume data is to determine the number of people viewing the landscape at various locations. The greater the number of viewers in any given area, the greater the "exposure" it receives and the greater its sensitivity is said to be. Actual use volume is categorized into one of three levels (H, M, or L) according to the following criteria (BLM Manual 8411 31A1a):

	H		M		L
CRITERIA	HIGH		MEDIUM		LOW	
(1) Use volume (total) use, no distinction between types) cars and trains	Segments of travel routes, use sites or population centers which receive 200,000 or more visits/yr. or more than 200 vehicles/day (ADT year round), or comparable degree of use on a seasonal basis.		Segments of travel routes, use sites or population centers which receive 20,000 to 200,000 visits/year or 20 to 200 vehicles per day (ADT year round), or a comparable degree of use on a seasonal basis.		Travel route segments with less than 20,000 visits/yr. or less than 20 vehicles/day (ADT year round).	
(2) Use volume - trails, rivers, water bodies, trams	20,000 or more visits/yr.		2000 - 20,000 visits/yr.		less than 2000 visits/yr.	

Travel routes or use areas of High or Moderate volume are considered to be Key Observation Points (KOPs). From these KOPs, the landscape can be seen (referred to as the "seen area") is mapped out to a maximum distance of 15 miles. The level of volume of that KOP (either High or Moderate) is then designated for the entire seen area around that KOP. Where an area can be seen from both a high volume KOP and a moderate volume KOP, the high designation is given.

Use data for this study was obtained through the BLM Area Offices, from the State Highway Department, county road departments, State Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation, U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. Though somewhat variable in age, the data used, in all cases, was the most current available. Where notable data gaps occurred, the best estimate of the agency representative was used considering current use patterns and known use levels of adjacent roads/areas.

Seen areas were manually derived in the office through the use of topographic and raised relief maps. The results were reviewed and refined during the course of the study by the Project Manager and other members of the study team.

USER ATTITUDES

Data on user attitudes toward change is collected in order to determine the extent of public concern for various lands within the planning unit and specifically, their attitudes toward visual modification of the landscape. It is the only point in the inventory process where public input is considered.

The procedure used in this analysis was a somewhat modified version of the "Extensive" (low level) procedure set forth in BLM Manual 8411. Basically, it involves a workshop format with selected representatives of various agencies, private interests and public interest groups. They are asked to respond to a variety of possible landscape modifications within specific landscape units which are based on the Scenic Quality Rating Units (SQRU). These responses are then evaluated by qualitative means to determine a high, moderate or low level of sensitivity for each rating area.

With this general direction from the BLM 8411 manual it was first necessary to determine the specific data needs and a format for obtaining this information. In order to determine user response to change it was decided to obtain a comprehensive list of the generic types of changes possible on BLM lands. These were then grouped into seven major over categories based on similarities in their visual effect on the landscape, e.g. landform, vegetation and/or structure modification. Only those specific generic types within each category that are appropriate to a given Resource Area are presented to workshop participants. In some instances it was necessary to subdivide an over category. This was done in order to represent different levels of concern which might arise from dissimilar modifications within a single over category.

As a context within which to judge these responses it was decided that participants should, at the outset, indicate the relative sensitivity or value they placed on the visual resource of each rating area. For this purpose, participants were asked to indicate the level of protection that should be given to the visual resource. One of four levels were presented as options: Very High Protection, High Protection, Moderate Protection or Low Protection. These were intended to generally correspond with VRM management classes.

After indicating the overall level of protection for an individual rating unit, participants were then instructed to indicate their relative preference toward specific landscape modifications that could potentially take place in that unit. Participants were asked to respond to each modification category in one of three ways:

A. This landscape type and rating area would be among the most preferable locations.

B. This landscape type and rating area would be a moderately preferable location.

C. This landscape type and rating area would be among the least preferable locations.

A response of "A" indicates a low user sensitivity for this type of modification in that particular rating unit. Conversely, a response of "C" would indicate a high user sensitivity for this type of modification within the rating unit.

Responses based upon preference serves a secondary purpose in that it is possible to identify rating units in which a modification is most preferred and those units in which the modification is least preferred. A workshop rating form was then developed around these data needs on a rating unit basis (see Figure 2). Participants were also instructed to indicate any specific issues, projects or areas of concern visually on the back of the rating forms. These responses were primarily for the benefit of the Area Manager and not factored into the final ratings.

To determine a list of workshop participants Wirth Associates first met with BLM representatives to develop a generic list of types of interest or agency input desired. The following general types of input were decided upon: federal, state and local (county and city) agency representation (including administrative, design and planning representatives); conservation organizations; cattlemen,

VISUAL SENSITIVITY WORKSHOP DATA SHEET

PARTICIPANT _____

REPRESENTING _____

DATE _____

KREMMLING RESOURCE AREA _____ NORTH PARK PLANNING UNIT

RATING AREA		DESIRED VISUAL	USER REACTION TO VISUAL CHANGE BY:									
Name	No.	MGMT. CLASS	Landform-1		Landform-2	Landform-3	Landf./Veg.-1		Landf./Veg.-2	Vegetation	Veg./Struct.	
			A	B			A	B			A	B

CATAGORIES OF VISUAL CHANGE

Landform-1

Mining - a. oil and gas
b. coal surface mining

Landform-2

Landfill
Gravel Operations

Landform-3

Dams/Water Impoundments
(irrigation and storage, livestock storage, waterfowl protection areas)

Landform/Vegetation-1

a. Secondary Roads
Railroads
b. Pipelines

Landform/Vegetation-2

ORV Use (sand dunes)

Vegetation

Land Treatment
(herbiciding, timber removal)

Vegetation/Structure

a. Power Lines
Reflectors/Repeators
Substations
b. Resorts/Ski Areas
Housing

DESIRED VISUAL MANAGEMENT LEVEL

VH = Very High Protection - the existing appearance of this area should not be changed.

H = High [illegible]tion - modification could take place but would have to be [illegible]ghtly visible in this landscape.

M = Moderate Protection - modification could take place and may be readily visible but not more dominant than the existing landscape.

USER REACTION TO VISUAL CHANGE BY:

If we assume that visual modification of the types listed above will occur or continue in this region:

A = T[illegible]scape type and rating area would be among the most p[illegible]e locations.

B = This landscape type and rating area would be a moderately preferable location.

mining and utility representation; off-road vehicle, guide and sky type recreation representation; and Chamber of Commerce and "average citizen" representation. From this generic list, the BLM District and/or Area Office selected specific representatives for each category. Both a preliminary letter of notification and a follow-up letter were composed by Wirth Associates and sent to each selected representative (example following page 17). This was followed by a personal phone reminder by Wirth Associates prior to the meeting.

The Project Director and Project Manager made a flight over the study area two days prior to the workshop to review scenic quality rating unit boundaries and ratings, to become personally familiar with the study area prior to the workshop, and to determine whether or not certain rating units should be further sub-divided or combined for purposes of the workshop. Final visual sensitivity workshop rating unit maps and forms were then prepared on this basis.

The workshop format followed the following basic outline:

A. Introduction (BLM Area Manager)
   - Relationship of this study to the overall Area planning effort

B. Study overview and background (Wirth Associates)

C. VRM program overview (Wirth Associates)

D. Slide overview of rating areas within the Resource Area (Wirth Associates)

E. Slide examples of various possible generic landscape modifications (Wirth Associates)

F. Participant ratings on a rating unit by rating unit basis (facilitated by Wirth Associates)

G. Participant narratives on specific issues or projects of concern (facilitated by Wirth Associates).

Following the workshop, an initial analysis of the results was made by Wirth Associates which led to a preliminary overall user attitude rating of Low, Moderate or High for each rating unit. Initially, each form was reviewed to determine whether or not the results would be utilized. Forms were considered invalid if it were apparent that the participant was confused about the information requested or made no distinction between rating areas or types of change (e.g. rated all possible actions for all rating areas the same).

Where ratings were ambiguous but a reasonable assumption could be made as to the intended response changes were made and documented on the rating form. Partially completed forms were utilized if responses apepared consistent and an understanding of the desired information was apparent by the responses given.

Valid forms were qualitatively evaluated and tallied by the same review team according to a rating form specially designed for this purpose (see Figure 3). According to this form, responses to Desired Management Class are totaled and compared to totals for responses to various categories of landscape change. Where there was a difference for a rating area between the overall level of protection designated through the Desired Management Class and the overall level of sensitivity toward change, a preliminary H/M or M/L designation was given.

Once the preliminary analysis was complete, a follow-up meeting was held with the Area Manager and appropriate members of his staff to review the results. An explanation of the preliminary analysis procedure was presented and reviewed. Following this, each summary and analysis form was reviewed with the Area Office personnel. Borderline H/M and M/L ratings were resolved at this time based on intensity of responses, consistency of thought, overall trends, specific participant responses, amount of BLM land in the rating area, user types and trends in the area and specific issues surrounding the area. In addition, if the Area Manager and staff felt that, based on the above considerations, participant responses clearly did not reflect the true level of sensitivity for a given area, they raised or lowered the rating. In all cases, a written rationale was prepared in the space provided on each summary and analysis form (Figure 3) which documented the basis for the final rating.

VISUAL SENSITIVITY WORKSHOP DATA
SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

PLANNING UNIT NORTH PARK

Rating Units	Desired Mgmt. Class**	
Workshop Rating Unit:	VH	
Scenic Quality Rating Unit(s):	H	
LANDSCAPE VALUES HIGH / MED.	M	
LOW	L	

PARTICIPANT RESPONSES BY LANDSCAPE MODIFICATION CATEGORY									
LF-1		LF-2	LF-3	LF/V-1		LF/V-2	VEG.	VEG/ST	
a	b			a	b			a	b

Final Rating: _____

Rationale: _____

* ▭ = High Ratings; ▒ = Moderate Ratings; ▓ = Low Ratings

** See Reverse side for specific types of visual change within each category.

Subject: BLM Colorado Visual Resource Inventory,
Sensitivity Workshop, Walden, Colorado, July 12, 1979

Dear

As a part of an ongoing effort to prepare a resource inventory of public lands, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is in the process of directing an inventory of the visual resources for approximately 8.5 million acres within Colorado.

Portions of all four BLM districts in Colorado are involved in this inventory -- Craig, Grand Junction, Montrose and Canon City. The inventory covers all lands within certain Planning Units (PU) in the following BLM Resource Areas (RA):

CRAIG DISTRICT		GRAND JUNCTION DISTRICT	
Little Snake River	RA	Glenwood Springs	RA
Williams Fork	PU	Grand Junction	RA
Nipple Rim	PU		
Brown's Park	PU	MONTROSE DISTRICT	
Kremmling	RA	San Juan	RA
North Park	PU	Uncompahgre Basin	RA
		San Miguel	RA
		CANON CITY DISTRICT	
		Royal Gorge	RA
		Northeast	RA

The attached map shows the general locations of these BLM Districts, Resource Areas, and Planning Units.

Wirth Associates, Inc., has been retained by the BLM to conduct this visual resource inventory in Colorado. As a part of this effort, Wirth Associates is conducting a series of workshops with representatives of federal, state, and local agencies, and special interest groups within each of the previously listed Resource Areas and Planning Units. Public concerns for changes to the visual quality within each Resource Area and Planning Unit are the focus of these meetings.

A workshop will be held for the North Park Planning Unit (highlighted on attached map) in Walden, Colorado on Thursday, July 12, 7:00 p.m. at the Soil Conservation Service Building.

Please plan to participate at this meeting, and share with us your insight and understanding of public concerns over visual changes occurring, or possibly occurring, to landscapes within the North Park Planning Unit.

Your assistance will enable the BLM to more responsively manage the visual resources on public lands.

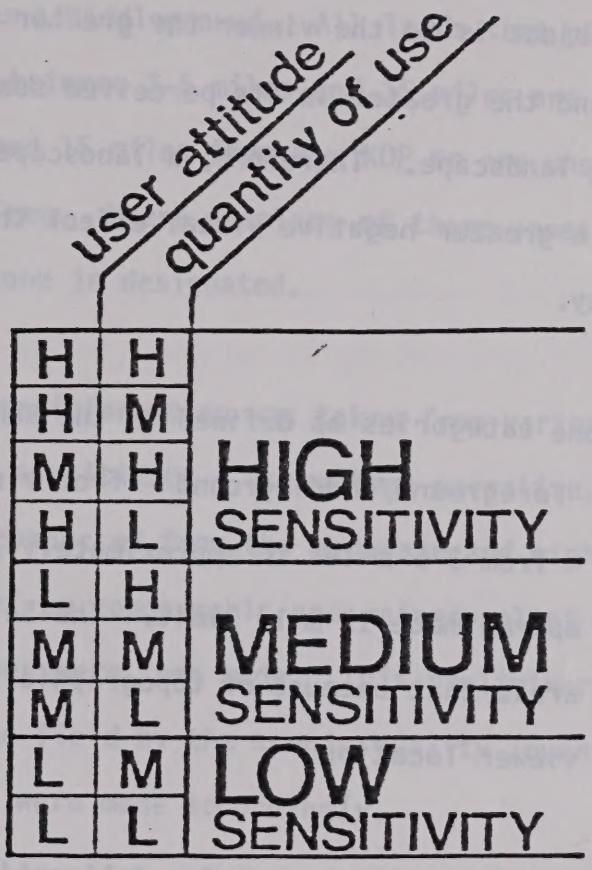
We will be contacting you again prior to the workshop to provide you with additional information concerning the format and specific content of the meeting in Walden.

Sincerely,

Roger Zortman
Area Manager

FINAL SENSITIVITY

The Final Sensitivity Rating is the result of the combination of use volume sensitivity and user attitudes sensitivity according to the following matrix taken from the BLM Manual (8411.31A4):



The process used is a mechanical one in which the two preliminary sensitivity maps are overlain and the final sensitivity rating for any given area is determined simply by the particular conditions of the two preliminary ratings. When very small islands of land resulted (less than 1/2 mile wide) that had a rating different from the adjacent land, a decision was made to give it the designation of the adjacent land with which it had the most similarity from a management standpoint.

Distance Zones

CRITERIA

Distance Zone classifications are used to indicate the relative detail that is perceived in natural and man-made features on the landscape. The closer an object is to the viewer the greater the detail in which it is perceived and the greater is its perceived scale in relation to the surrounding landscape. Therefore, a landscape modification near the viewer would have a greater negative visual effect than the same modification seen further away.

Distance Zone categories as defined in the BLM VRM system include the following: Foreground/Middleground - from viewer location to 3-5 miles; Background = from 3-5 miles to approximately 15 miles; and Seldom Seen = beyond the approximate 15 mile limit. The Seldom Seen designation is also applied to areas that because of topographic screening are unseen from any designated viewer location.

The criteria and procedure used for delineating distance zones are those set forth in BLM;s 8411 manual. This procedure first involves the determination of Key Observer Points (KOPs). These points are the same as those used for the visual sensitivity - use volume study (see use volume methodology narrative preceeding).

From these points (or travel routes) a "seen area analysis" (see visual sensitivity - use volume narrative) is conducted. All lands that can be seen from that point or travel corridor out to a distance of 3-5 miles are labeled as Foreground/Middleground. All lands that can be seen from that point or corridor between 3-5 miles and 15 miles are labeled as Background. All lands that are beyond 15 miles from any KOP or are unseen from any KOP are labeled as Seldom Seen. Where overlaps of these zones occur (from 2 or more KOPs) the closer zone is designated.

For this study use volume information was taken from various sources, as indicated in the visual sensitivity - use volume narrative. A manual seen area analysis was conducted from the moderate and high volume points/ corridors in the office from topographic and raised relief maps. Appropriate distance zone designations were then made. This preliminary distance zone map was then taken to the field by the scenic quality inventory team for verification. Revisions were made accordingly.

Uncompahgre Basin RA
Montrose DISTRICT

CIMARRON PLANNING UNIT

General Setting

The Cimarron Planning Unit is the southern most planning unit within the Uncompahgre Resource Area, and encompasses 306,000 acres. It is bordered to the northeast by the Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit, to the northwest by the Escalante Planning Unit, and to the south by the San Juan Mountain Range.

The San Juans rise dramatically immediately south of the unit. Cimarron Ridge, a north-south oriented extension of the San Juan Mountains border the eastern boundary of this unit. Both of these landforms form a distinct visual boundary to the planning unit.

Within the planning unit a number of different landscape character types occur, including mountains, badlands, mesas, broad valleys, and major river valleys.

As described by Fenneman, this planning unit contains two major physiographic provinces. The southern Rocky Mountain province is restricted to the eastern segments of the unit, while the Colorado Plateau province, made up of young to mature canyoned plateaus, constitutes the major physiographic region within the western segments of the planning unit.

The Uncompahgre River, which bisects the unit, is generally the interface between these two physiographic regions.

The western half of the unit is comprised of Log Hill Mesa, the most extensive mesa within the area. Sloping gently to the northeast, this mesa runs nearly

the entire length of the planning unit. It is relatively uniform in degree of slope and vegetative variety. Many small parallel and linear stream courses drain the mesa and empty into the Uncompahgre River. These drainages have exposed rock outcrop sidewalls which provide the only major visual diversity within this uniform landscape.

To the east of the Uncompahgre River the landscape is more complex and diverse. In the south and southeastern segments of the unit the landscape is more mountainous. Primarily lesser mountains to the San Juans and Cimarron Ridge, these areas contain the greatest vegetative diversity and overall diversity found within the planning unit.

The lower hills below the more mountainous slopes directly east of the Uncompahgre River are the most diverse landform features in the unit. A difference exists in these lesser hills north and south of the community of Colona. South of Colona the hills have been eroded by numerous streams. Rock outcrops and diverse vegetative patterns prevail in this area. North of Colona the hills take on a much different character and contrast greatly to all other landforms. These hills take on a "Badland" nature locally termed adobes. As a complex system of hills made of Mancos shales, these northern landforms lack any vegetative cover. Interesting shadow and color patterns are the dominant visual features within this Badland environment.

The upper areas to these lesser hills are more mountainous and contain greater diversity of vegetative species, but are generally less diverse in topography. Major landforms within this area include Waterdog Peak, Storm King Mountain, and the Sawtooth Rocks. Storm King and the Sawtooth Rocks are the most northern landforms to Cimarron Ridge.

As noted earlier the Uncompahgre River, the major drainage within the unit, bisects the unit. South of Montrose the river valley is well defined due to the adjacent landforms of Log Hill Mesa and the lesser mountains to Cimarron Ridge. North of Montrose the river valley itself is less defined. Here the river, along with the adjacent California and east mesas visually appear to form the Uncompahgre Basin. These two mesas are relatively flat and are used extensively for agricultural and ranching purposes.

Vegetation is varied within the unit. Log Hill Mesa and the southern lesser hills are dominantly covered with pinyon-juniper and scrub oak associations. As one gains elevation, firs, pines, and aspen dominate on all aspects. These associations are found around Miller Mesa and the South Baldy area, as well as the upper slopes below Cimarron Ridge, Waterdog Peak, and Baldy Peak. Cottonwoods, willows, and other water oriented species are restricted to valley bottoms throughout the unit. Agricultural areas on East and California Mesa contain a variety of related vegetative associations.

Major creeks draining into the Uncompahgre River include Pleasant Valley, Cottonwood, Dallas, and Cow Creeks. All of these are located in the southern segments of the unit below the mountains.

The major north-south traveled route includes Route 550 which runs the entire length of the unit through Ridgeway, Montrose and Olathe. East-west routes include Route 62 which crosses Dallas Divide and joins Route 550 at Ridgeway in the southern segment of the Planning Unit. The northern east-west traveled route is Route 50 which traverses from Cimarron to Montrose.

Urban centers include Montrose, Olathe and Ridgeway. Other populated areas consist of the agricultural and ranching communities north of Montrose.

TABLE 1

SQRU GENERAL LANDSCAPE TYPES & SUMMARY
PLANNING UNIT: CIMARRON

GENERAL TYPE KEY

Mountains	MT	Rolling Hills	RH
Ridges and Narrow Valleys	R&NV	Broad Valleys	BV
Canyons	C	River Valley	RV
Parks	P	Basin	B
Mesas	M	Reservoirs	R
		Badlands	B

SQRU NO.	NAME	GENERAL TYPE
001	Upper Uncompahgre River	River Valley
002	Miller Mesa/South Baldy	Ridges & Narrow Valleys
003	Pleasant Valley	River Valley/Narrow Valley
004	Spruce Mountain	Mountains
005	Desert Tank	Rolling Hills
006	Uncompahgre River Canyon	Canyon/River Valley
007	Baldy Peak	Rolling Hills
008	Cow Creek	Narrow Valley/River Valley
009	Log Hill Mesa	Mesa
010	Uncompahgre River Valley	River Valley
011	Dry Cedar Creek Hills	Badlands
012	Storm King	Mountains
013	Chaffee Gulch	Rolling Hills
014	Beaten Creek	Narrow Valley
015	Coal Hill	Rolling Hills
016	Bostwick Park	Park
017	Cedar Creek	Narrow Valley
020	Squaw Creek	Narrow Valley
060	North Uncompahgre River	River Valley
061	California Mesa	Mesa/Basin
062	East Mesa	Mesa/Basin
063	High Mesa	Mesa
064	Spring Creek Mesa	Mesa/Basin
065	Franklin Mesa	Mesa
066	Shavano Valley	Narrow Valley
067	Dry Creek Canyon	Canyon

TABLE 2

DISTRICT: MONTROSE

RESOURCE AREA: UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN

PLANNING UNIT: CIMARRON

SQRU NO.	SQRU NAME	RATING CRITERIA LF	V	W	C	AS	S	CM	TOTAL NO.	SQR
001	Upper Uncompahgre River	3	4	5	4	5	2	2	24	A
002	Miller Mesa/ South Baldy	3	3	2	3	5	1	2	19	A
003	Pleasant Valley	1	3	4	3	5	1	1	18	B
004	Spruce Mtn.	2	3	0	3	5	1	2	16	B
005	Desert Tank	1	3	0	4	5	2	2	17	B
006	Uncompahgre River Canyon	3	3	5	4	4	2	2	23	A
007	Baldy Peak	3	3	0	3	4	1	2	16	B
008	Cow Creek	2	4	4	4	3	1	2	20	A
009	Log Hill Mesa	2	1	1	1	3	1	2	11	C
010	Uncompahgre River Valley	1	3	3	2	3	1	-2	11	C
011	Dry Cedar Crk Hills	3	1	0	1	2	1	2	10	C
012	Storm King	3	4	1	3	2	1	2	16	B
013	Chaffee Gulch	3	2	1	2	2	1	1	12	B
014	Beaton Creek	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	8	C
015	Coal Hill	2	3	0	3	1	1	2	12	B
016	Bostwick Park	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	10	C
017	Cedar Creek	2	2	2	3	0	1	1	11	C
020	Squaw Creek	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	14	B
060	N. Uncompahgre R.	1	3	4	1	2	1	1	13	B
061	California Mesa	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	11	C
062	East Mesa	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	11	C
063	High Mesa	1	2	0	1	3	1	1	9	C
064	Spring Creek Mesa	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	11	C
065	Franklin Mesa	1	2	0	1	3	1	1	9	C
066	Shavano Valley	1	3	1	1	0	1	1	8	C
067	Dry Creek Canyon	3	3	1	2	0	1	2	12	B

District Montrose Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron Evaluator(s) KVM, MF,

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 001-Upper Uncompahgre River

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 1-7, 9, 17
9 13

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: River Valley

General Narrative: The Uncompahgre River valley is narrow, generally one-half to one mile wide, channeled by steep side slopes visually part of the valley. The river is obvious from a number of view points and although narrow and fast it supports a large community of vegetation, in some places very thick large cottonwood stands. The valley is developed in agriculture and a number of ranches share the area with many vacation oriented cottages and campgrounds. These modifications do not detract from the real sense of place one feels when moving through the valley. Adjacent scenery, the San Juan Mountains and other steep slopes, are spectacular and bring to mind similar scenery in Sqitzerland. Ouray, just outside of this unit is called the "Switzerland of Colorado".

The rock outcrops consist of dark reds, middle to light greys, and contrast with the fields of light grasses, the river, the surrounding pinyon juniper, Ponderosa Pine, and the lighter scrub oak, and other shrubs.

This valley is visually exciting and a pleasure to drive through.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-steep side slopes
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	4-mixed
3	Water	5	3	0	5-river
4	Color	5	3	1	4-rock, water, veg.
5	Influence	5	3	0	5-surrounding mtns.
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	2
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Scenic Qual
Classificati

Class A 19-
Class B 12-
Class C 11

SQRU Fin
001

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 24 = ____
A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron Evaluator(s) KVM, MF, D

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 002-Miller Mesa & South Baldy

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 8, 12-17
9 3

Time of Day 11:00 a.m.

Weather partly sunny

Landscape Character: Ridges and Narrow Valleys

General Narrative: This unit is a collection of ridges, narrow valleys, a few lower mountains (i.e. South Baldy Mountain, 9829'), several areas termed "mesas" on the topographic map, and a number of creeks, streams and intermittent bogs, as well as a few very small lakes and ponds. Broken and varied terrain would aptly describe this unit -- yet the majority is ridges and narrow valleys.

Rating this unit our team felt it was not an "A" area -- but using the rating system it could not be anything else. The slopes are steep and rugged; pinyon juniper, some aspen and scrub oak are thickly forested; water is present but does not dominate; there are no intrusions; color varies from soil, rock, plant and water; and the surrounding San Juan mountains are adjacent and spectacular.

It is our consensus that the major factor is "influence" of the adjacent scenery that really makes this unit an "A" landscape. It is easy to imagine future development for second home use just for this scenery. Without this strong influence these "ridges and narrow valleys" would be much more common and much less on the rating scale.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	2
4	Color	5	3	1	3
5	Influence	5	3	0	5-San Juan Range
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 19 = ____
A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 002 Final A

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) KM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 003-Pleasant Valley

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 10,11,13,17,18,19
9 3,4

Time of Day 11:30 a.m.

Weather mostly overcast

Landscape Character: River Valley/Narrow Valleys

General Narrative: The Pleasant Valley Rating Unit consists of a flat valley 1-2 miles wide located in a forked trough. To the north the base of a mesa slopes up from the valley floor. To the south irregular ridges and scattered hills form the valley's boundary. At its upper end the valley merges with gentle slopes covered with aspen and mountain shrubs. To the east the valley merges with another narrower valley just to the north of the town of Ridgeway. High rugged peaks form a scenic backdrop.

A perennial stream weaves its way across the valley floor. Cottonwoods cluster along the banks at various intervals. Croplands dominate the vegetative composition of the valley except where stands of willows and other mesic plants form small scattered units.

Color contrasts are not drastic within this unit although cottonwood and willow leaves in autumn undoubtedly enhance its scenic quality.

A few ranches and farmhouses, randomly spaced throughout the unit, add to its rustic agricultural atmosphere.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-little relief
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-2 to 3 types
3	Water	5	3	0	4
4	Color	5	3	1	3
5	Influence	5	3	0	5-rugged peaks
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-ranches, homes

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 18 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 003 Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) MF, KVM, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 004-Spruce Mountain

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 11,14
9 6,7,8,9

Time of Day 11:30 a.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Mountains

General Narrative: This unit is located in the southwest corner of the planning unit west of the community of Ridgeway. It consists of three mountain peaks, West Baldy, Spruce Mountain, and Horsefly Peak. All of these appear to have smooth rounded forms when viewed at a distance. The slopes are gently and relatively non-dramatic and fall an average of 500 to 700 feet. Horsefly Peak and Spruce Mountain rise above Log Hill Mesa to the northeast and are the visual termini for this mesa.

Vegetation is sparse and patchy, consisting of relatively extensive groves of aspen intermixed between pinyon pine and juniper. Scrub oak is the dominant understory which is isolated primarily around other vegetative associations. All vegetation is generally found in the lower areas of the unit, while the tops are covered with grasses and small shrubs.

Views are panoramic throughout this unit. Cimarron Ridge, Pleasant Valley, and the spectacular San Juan Mountains are all nearby and add significantly to the scenic quality of this area. Free from major cultural intrusions, the unit appears to be quite natural. One radio tower is situated on Spruce Mountain, but we are unable at this time to determine the extent of this facility due to snow and inaccessible roads.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	3
5	Influence	5	3	0	5
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 16 = ____

A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

SQRU Fin

004

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	3
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scenerity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	-3

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) KM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 005-Desert Tank

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 11, 14, 15
9 5, 6, 7

Time of Day 12:30 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Rolling Hills

General Narrative: Gentle undulations across a slope dipping slightly to the northeast form this unit. Aspen, scrub oak and other mountain shrubs cover these smooth hillsides. Periodically the continuous shrub canopy is broken small patches of open grassland. Pinyons, junipers and an occasional Ponderosa Pine are sprinkled across the lower limits of this unit.

As the seasons change, an impressive display of color occurs with the shift from dark green accents on a brown and white field in winter to the greens and browns of summer to the brilliant oranges, reds and golds of fall.

No streams or bodies of water are obvious from a drive through the area.

In the distance high rugged peaks jut up to the northwest. Ridges and valleys form the adjacent scenery to the south and east. A large mesa dominates the northern horizon.

No cultural modifications are apparent with the exception of the highway and a turnout for motorists along the road.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	4-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	5-mountains
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	2
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 17 = ____
A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU 005

Fina

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

GUNNISON GORGE

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Transmission Line #6

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	2	4

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	6	M	M	L	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 4 Frame # 29,30

Time of day 4:00 p Weather sunny

Evaluator MF, DS

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4). This steel latice transmission line lies on the border of unit 24, and unit 23. Throughout its length, the dominance varies due to its alignment. The more dominant views are when the corridor is atop a major ridge. Though it does not greatly diminish the scenic quality, vegetation planting around the towers would help reduce the dominance of this line.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY AND FEATURE CONTRAST SCORE

GUNNISON GORGE

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Substation #8

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	4	0

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	8	L	M	H	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 6 Frame # 24

Time of day 12:30a Weather sunny

Evaluator MF, DS

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).
When compared to the entire rating area, this substation has a minor impact upon scenic quality. To reduce the impact would require small vegetative plantings around the border of the substation. This would greatly reduce the minor impact it does have upon the rating unit.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

GUNNISON GORGE

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Pipeline #7

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	5	1

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
2	0	0	7	L	M	H	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 6 Frame # 23

Time of day 3:30p Weather sunny

Evaluator MF, DS

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).
This pipeline which is located in the upper part of Current Creek is buried. The visual modification is apparent in the vegetative clearing as a result of the construction. Overtime vegetative species native to the area will establish themselves reducing to visual contrast of cleared vs. natural landscape.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification _____

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates _____

3. Unit Resource Analysis in Order

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
					0	5	1

9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
2	0	0	7	L	M	H	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality
4. Zoning Unit
5. Type
6. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

Film Roll # _____ Frame # _____

Time of day _____ Weather _____

Evaluator _____ Date _____

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4): _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Types
(5) I - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contrast can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

District Montrose Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron Evaluator(s) KVM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 006-Uncompahgre River Canyon

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 25,26,27
4 1

Time of Day 3:30 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Canyon/River Valley

General Narrative: This stretch of river (canyon) extends 10 miles north-south between steep rock walls on the west, often 500'-600' higher than the canyon floor, and a steep but broken series of hills on the east, again often 500'-600' above the road level. Highway 550 parallels the river as does tracks from the Denver-Rio Grande Railroad, all three within a canyon corridor only one-hal to one mile wide when the top of the ridges are figured in. A number of residen (usually ranches) are spaced out though red rock and greystone walls are massive and concentrate views of immediate or nearby areas and occasionally open into panoramic views of the surrounding San Juan Mountains. These are "postcard" views, spectacular and immense, dwarfing the ranches, the rock walls and the river.

The Uncompahgre River meanders through this often narrow landscape adding movement, color, vegetation and interest. Though not a unique scene in this part of the state, it is never the less encompassing and beautiful. The scattered modifications do not detract from the view and often add scale and focus to this diverse panorama.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	5-river
4	Color	5	3	1	4-rock, veg., river
5	Influence	5	3	0	4
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	2
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 23 = ____
A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 006 Final

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) KM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 007-Baldy Peak

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 7, 22, 24

Time of Day 2:30 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Rolling Hills

General Narrative: The foothills unit rises above the narrow valley unit, curling around it in a nearly complete circle. Beyond the foothills is a narrow band of riparian habitat that separates the foothills unit from the higher mountains. The angular outline of these adjacent mountains can be easily seen from most points in the foothills unit. From the higher foothills, Montrose Valley and mountains peaks beyond it can be seen.

The foothills form a somewhat jumbled landscape with numerous small valleys in between them. Intermittent streams which flow through the valleys form a jigsaw patterned drainage system.

The hillsides are covered by relatively dense stands of pinyon and juniper. Ponderosa pines are scattered throughout. A few hillsides lack a dense tree canopy but instead are dominated by mountain shrub or grass communities. Common shrubs are Scrub Oak, Big Sagebrush, Rabbitbrush and Wild Rose.

Cultural modifications are few and consist primarily of a few hidden ranch homes, several back roads and a tall deer fence.

Approximately 19 mule deer (2 bucks) were spotted during our tour of the area.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-foothills
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	0-intermittent
4	Color	5	3	1	3
5	Influence	5	3	0	4-mountains, valley
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 14 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU 007

Fina

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

7	Cultural Modification	5	0	-5	5
6	Security	5	5	1	1-common
5	Intimacy	5	3	0	4-dominated* by [illegible]
4	Color	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	2	0	0-insignificant
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-important
		High	Medium	Low	Explanation of Importance of

Score (Circle appropriate Level)

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) MF, KVM, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 008-Cow Creek

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 20, 21, 23
9 10

Time of Day 1:30 p.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley, River Valley

General Narrative: Cow Creek Valley is situated between a series of rolling foothills to the north and south and below Cimarron Ridge. Cow Creek meanders through this narrow valley which is bordered by moderately sloping sidewalls that define the unit boundary.

The valley floor is gently rolling to flat and contrasts to the sidewalls because of topography and vegetation. A dense stand of cottonwoods and willows follow the curvilinear pattern of the water course while pinyon and juniper are primarily found on the side slopes of this valley. The density of the cottonwoods appears somewhat unusual. When viewed from the above the valley floor the contrast between the sparse evergreens and the cottonwoods is striking Wild Rose, sage and a variety of mesophytic plants are found throughout the valley bottom. The major development is in the form of small ranches that have many separate grazing tracts throughout the valley. Views are isolated within this unit except for a focal view looking upstream to the spectacular Cimarron Ridge. The unit has not been disturbed by the ranches and appears natural. The color, vegetation, and landform contrasts create a visually interesting and beautiful landscape.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	4-diverse
3	Water	5	3	0	4
4	Color	5	3	1	4-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 20 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 008 Final A

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) KVM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 009-Log Hill Mesa

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 28-30, 33, 34
2 1,2,5,8
3 2
9 1, 23

Time of Day 4:00 P.M.

Weather Overcast

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Log Hill Mesa is a vast area containing a uniform 5-6% slope SW-NE, containing a large number of drainages flowing with the grade A series of small canyons, creeks, and intermittent streams create a washboard-rolling effect on all roads passing diagonally to this pattern. From within the mesa the landscape appears slowly rolling, and due to the thick pinyon-juniper forest views of the mesa are obscured while views of the vast system of surrounding mountains are panoramic. Vegetation is primarily pinyon-juniper with occasional scrub oak and ponderosa pine and understory species including occasional sage and grassy parks. Deer were spotted grazing along the drainages. Many areas of tree cover were chained or otherwise cleared for grazing. A number of scattered ranches occupy the mesa.

This is a natural but common area; somewhat dull visually except for adjacent scenery of the San Juan Mountains.

A large steel towered transmission line passes through the mesa and up and across the mountains to the east cutting a distinct path, however, within the mesa it does not dominate.

(3 elk spotted at 5:15 P.M.)

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-slowly rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1-few types
3	Water	5	3	0	1-no influence
4	Color	5	3	1	1-little contrast
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-panoramic
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or Les

SQRU	Final Ra
009	C

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ (A, B, or C)

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FORM

District Montrose Date 1/16/79

Planning Unit Cimarron Evaluator(s) KVM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 010-Uncompahgre River Valley*

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 31,32
2 25,32
3 3,12,13,17,18,20

Time of Day 9:00 a.

Weather overcast/snowing

Landscape Character: River corridor

*between Montrose & Colona

General Narrative: In this unit the Uncompahgre River flows north from Colona to Montrose, and beyond Montrose 4 miles through a wide flat valley. Most of t land along the river is given over to agriculture either for grazing or for crop production. Homes, ranch buildings and stores are located throughout the valley. The Denver and Rio Grande Western Railroad follows parallel to the major highway which bisects this unit end to end. (The railroad is not a major intrusion). A transmission line corsses the southern portion of the valley.

Small cattail marches are present at intervals along the river's winding course. Cottonwoods grow along brief stretches of the riverbank or occur as windbreaks separating flat, open pastures. Three male ringneck pheasants were seen eating seed in a pasture with cattle. A flock of eight ducks were observed swimming in the river below a bridge.

From the valley, sloping hillsides rise covered with open stands of pinyon-juniper. High mountains can be seen in the distance. Deer were seen grazing on the hillsides.

In the valley colors are relatively muted with only seasonal contrasts. The adjacent scenery is the major source for visual stimulation and color comparisons.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-agriculture
3	Water	5	3	0	3-not prominent
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	-2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU Fina

010

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/16/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) KVM, MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 011-Dry Cedar Creek Hills

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 33,35
2 23,24
3 4,6,7,9,14,15,16,19
4 1

Time of Day 10:00 a.

Weather Overcast with some

Landscape Character: Badlands

General Narrative:

This unit appears to contain a loose soil, probably well-drained and dry, from the sparse vegetation present and the lack of trees. Grass appears dominant, weedy forbs are present, and it would appear to suit snakes and small rodents.

The hills themselves are irregular to a large degree in both size and shape; some hills are conical, others loaf shaped, still others are angular and/or sloping. Elevations range from 6000' to 7000'.

Within this unit a large irrigation canal has been constructed generally north-south. Several drainage areas, including "Dry Cedar Creek", have cut generally northeast to southwest channels but have little water for visual impact.

Views of adjacent areas are good. The area is natural but common.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1-little
3	Water	5	3	0	0-little
4	Color	5	3	1	1-little contrast
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU Finc

011

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) MF, KVM, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 012-Storm King

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 33
4 2
5 6
9 11,12,14,16

Time of Day 12:00 noon

Weather overcast and snow

Landscape Character: Mountains

General Narrative: This series of mountains marks the eastern boundary of this planning unit. Cimarron Ridge and Storm King mountain are the major landforms within this unit. Both are part of a linear ridge extension of the higher San Juan Mountains. With a variety of slopes, rounded, steeply sloping, and vertical, there is a diversity of landforms within this area. A number of creeks drain the area, typical of mountain environments.

Vegetation consists of large extensive stands of aspens, ponderosa pine, and fir interspersed between open grassy fields. Willows and some cottonwoods are common to lower elevation valley floors. Depending upon observer position, views are contained in the valleys and panoramic on open slopes and higher ridges. These panoramic views are of the main segment of Cimarron Ridge in the San Juan forest, a spectacular vertical broken wall of rock, and of the majestic "alp like" San Juan Mountains above the town of Ouray. Few modifications exist, although a large transmission line bisects the area and a number of back country roads run throughout the unit.

The area appears to be quite natural and is visually interesting due to varieties of landforms, vegetation, textures and colors.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	4
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 16 = ____
A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 012 Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 013-Chaffee Gulch

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 2,3,5
9 11,14

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Rolling Hills

General Narrative: Situated below Storm King Mountain and Cimarron Ridge, and above the Uncompahgre River Basin, this unit is a transitionary landform between the two. The landform is diverse consisting of uniform isolated low mountains and uniform slopes that lead up to the higher mountains to the east. Some slopes are completely covered with scrub oak, the dominant vegetative type, while the steep slopes of the isolated low mountains are relatively barren. These steep slopes appear to be sedimentary in origin. Lacking stratification, they consist of a mass of muds and sands, similar to the badlands unit (011) to the north.

As mentioned before, vegetation is primary pinyon pine with a scrub oak understory. These stands are extensive and thick creating a visually uniform and uninterewting environment.

A number of intermittent streams flowing out of the unit are not a focal point and add little to the scenic quality.

Intrusions are few with the exception of one major transmission line which crosses the unit in the northern portion. This corridor is relatively small when compared to the entire rating unit, and consequently has little effect on scenic quality. The area apepars natural but has few outstanding features.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-little diversity
3	Water	5	3	0	1-intermittent streams
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-San Juans & Cimarron Rdge
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU ↓ 013

Final ↓ B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 014-Beaton Creek

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 33,34,35
4 5
9 15

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: This small valley is an extension of the Uncompahgre River Valley to the west. It is gently rolling, but predominantly flat. One major sedimentary hill is situated in the middle of this small valley, and is the dominant focal point or landform of interest in this uninteresting area.

Vegetation is primarily grasslands although small dispersed stands of pinyon pine and scrub oak are situated outside these grazing areas. The major land use if farming and grazing. Few isolated residences are situated throughout this area and do not detract from this unit.

One transmission line crosses the unit and becomes a focal point when viewed throughout the area. Although fairly common and natural the area lacks visual interest and is fiarly dull with no outstanding features.

Beaten Creek flows out of the hills to the east but is not a dominant focal point.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-little diversity
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	1
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	0-transmission line

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 8 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU	Fina
014	C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 015-Coal Hill

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 11,12,15,16,17
5 6

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny, snow cove

Landscape Character: Coal Hill (rolling hills)

General Narrative: This rating unit consists of gentle slopes with smooth to slightly rolling topography. These slopes represent an intergradation between the upper hills and mountains and the lower knolls and valleys.

Vegetative cover consists of an extensive shrubby overstory (primarily Scrub Oak) which increases slightly in density along the very shallow drainages. A few pinyon and juniper are scattered throughout.

There are no distinctive landmarks or cultural intrusions.* Neither is there any remarkable geological or topographical feature. If there is any water it would be in the form of small intermittent streams which form as the snow melts.

Adjacent scenery consists of the rugged San Juans in the distance and the broad valley around Montrose below. Views are panoramic and add somewhat to the scenic quality of this area.

Color change is seasonal and the extensiveness of the scrub oak canopy surely adds visual variety in autumn.

* Small influence of a transmission line crossing the unit.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling hills
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-2 types
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-San Juans
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

SQRU Fir

015

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling hills
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-2 types
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-San Juans
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 016-Bostwick Park

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 6,7,11

Time of Day 10:15 a.

Weather sunny, snow cover

Landscape Character: Park

General Narrative: Bostwick Park is a flat open expanse which forms a transition zone between the upper mountain slopes covered with pinyon juniper and the lower rolling, sparsely vegetated hills.

These parks lack overstory vegetation and appear to have been cleared of natural vegetation either for grazing or for cultivation.

Fence posts, a few telephone poles and farmhouses are present along with a paved road, dirt roads and irrigation ditches which criss-cross the parks.

There are some peripheral stands of pinyon-juniper where the upper slopes adjoin the park and along the outer park edge where the land drops abruptly to the hills below. These parks are somewhat similar in form to the mesa tops which were cleared for agricultural purposes.

Some visual interest is created by the rugged San Juans in the distance and by the seasonal change in color as snow covered land is plowed, seeded and the crop harvested in fall.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1-cultivated
3	Water	5	3	0	1-irrigated ditches
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-distant mountains
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-agri. country
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-roads, houses

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU Finc

016

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 017-Cedar Creek

Film: Roll # 3 Frame # 5
4 13,14

Time of Day 11:30 a.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: Cedar Creek winds through a narrow valley which begins below Cerro Summit and which opens below into a broad valley east of Montrose.

South-facing slopes consist of the toes of smaller rolling hills which support open stands of pinyon and juniper with minimal understory. The valley bottom supports a shrubby growth composed of willows, greasewood and some sagebrush. The stream is narrow and deeply incised in the sandy bottom. The north-facing slopes consist of fine-textured soils which in places form short, crumbly ledges or cliffs 2-3 feet in height. Vegetation consists of a low scrubby cover of grasses, forbs and minor shrubs.

Since the valley is narrow and relatively deep the view is confined and only occasionally are the hills and mountains beyond visible.

This valley offers a little visual interest apart from some seasonal change in color. Visual quality is reduced further by the presence of Highway 50 which runs adjacent to the stream the full length of the valley. Steep cuts in the roadside banks have not been reclaimed or naturally revegetated. These appear as unattractive scars which detract from the viewing pleasure.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-steeper walls to S
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	2
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	0-confined
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	+1 road and banks

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU Fina

017

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 020-Squaw Creek

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 20,21

Time of Day 11:00 a.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: This unit is located in the eastern portion of the Cimarron and Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit. Though termed a narrow valley, it lacks a definite valley floor. Rather it is a "V" shaped unit defined by moderate ot steeply sloping sidewalls. Curvilinear in nature, it offers a variety of spatial experiences to those who travel Route 50 which bisects the unit and is located in the valley bottom.

The sideslopes are covered with a variety of vegetative species consisting of some evergreens, scrub oak and scattered pinyon pine. The narrow floor contains cottonwoods and some willows which follow the curvilinear Squaw Creek, an intermittent stream.

Views are primarily contained within the unit, although in some sections dramatic views of the rocky side slope of Poverty Mesa are present.

Colors are intense in fall with many yellows, golds and greens but are seasonal in nature. No modifications exist other than Route 50. As a result the area appears natural and is visually interesting.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling, undulating
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-variety
3	Water	5	3	0	2-intermittent (dominant)
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-Poverty Mesa
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 15 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 or

SQRU 020

Final 1

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/10/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge/Escalante,Cimarron

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 060-Uncompahgre River

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 21, 26
8 8, 9

Time of Day 4:15 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: River Valley

General Narrative: This end of the Uncompahgre River Valley differs considerabl from that described for unit 005. Urbanization is absent and the area has a more agricultural aspect. Homesteads and isolated commercial buildings do occur but are interspersed with open pasture and hayfields.

Natural vegetative cover is not extensive except along portions of the river where cottonwoods and other riparian vegetation is prevalent. Fields and pastures dominate the rest of the vegetative component.

The Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad and State Highway 50 bisect the valley.

Distant mountains, mesas and hills add a panoramic view but only moderately enhance the visual quality.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-riparian
3	Water	5	3	0	4-Uncompahgre River
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-distant
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 13 = ____ A, B, or

Scenic Qu Classifica

Class A 1

Class B 1

Class C 1

SQRU F

060

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-Flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-Riparian
3	Water	5	3	0	4-Uncompahgre River
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-distant
6	Scarcity	5	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal _____ + _____ + _____ = Total 11 = _____

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Escalante/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) PG, EB

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 061-California Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 6,7,8,10,11,14, 21, 22

7 31, 32

Time of Day 10:15 a.m.

Weather Overcast

Landscape Character: Plateau

General Narrative: This SQRU is characterized by a flat to gently rolling mesa which is bounded to the southwest by Cushman Creek Mesa and by the Uncompahgre River corridor, High Mesa, and the Shavano Valley to the east. To the north and west, the mesa extends into the Escalante Planning Unit.

The overall character of this landscape is dull, it is very common within the region. The land is smooth and largely flat and though some topographic variation exists, it adds little to the unit's scenic quality.

The land has been put to agricultural use, and thus it is characterized by large, open expanses of pastureland, cropland, and several orchards. In unmanaged areas, the natural vegetation consists of willows and cottonwoods along small drainages, and rabbit brush, grasses and scattered deciduous trees in other areas. The composition of the vegetation is quite diverse.

The area's color composition is rather muted though autumn colors may add a bit of variety. Widely sweeping views of the nearby valleys, mesas, and mountains lend a feeling of openness and vastness to the unit and add appreciably to the visual character of the unit.

The agricultural land uses have modified the unit considerably but not in a negative fashion.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-extensive flat mesa
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-diverse
3	Water	5	3	0	1-present not not prominent
4	Color	5	3	1	1-muted
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

SQRU Fin

061

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge/Escalante

Evaluator(s) EB, PG

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 062-East Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 22,24
3 7,10,11
8 7

Time of Day 1:00 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: See California Mesa

Bounded on east by foothills and on west by Uncompahgre River corridor.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____

Scenic Qua Classificat

Class A 19

Class B 12

Class C 11

SQRU Fi

062

A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) PG, EB

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 063-High Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 18,19

Time of Day 1:15 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: High Mesa stands at an approximate elevation of 5700 feet and is characterized by extensive, flat open land. At its wildest point, the mesa is only half a mile wide.

No water is present along the mesa top and the vegetation is comprised of very scattered 40-foot cottonwoods, waist high rabbit brush, and low grasses. The vegetative cover is very sparse and the majority of the mesa is characterized by open areas.

The mesa is elevated and affords extensive views of the surrounding mesas, valleys, and mountains. The adjacent scenery here is not spectacular, but its influence gives one a feeling for the vastness of the region and in this respect adds interest to what is otherwise a rather common landscape.

Land uses along the mesa are agricultural (orchards, croplands, grazing) and thus many structures and residences are present. The influence on the scenery is not overbearing and does not detract from the natural strength of the landscape. Rather, it adds a pastoral feeling to the area.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat mesa
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-little diversity
3	Water	5	3	0	0
4	Color	5	3	1	1-muted
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU	Final
063	C

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 9 = ____ A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) PG, EB

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 064-Spring Creek Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 17, 28-31, 33,34

Time of Day 1:20 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Spring Creek Mesa is a very broad and flat mesa which is separated from California Mesa by High Mesa and Franklin Mesa. It is dominated by agricultural land uses. Fruit orchards, pastures, croplands and the residences and structures associated with them are the major features of this landscape.

One major drainage, Mexican Gulch, runs north-south across the mesa. It is deeply entrenched but is quite short in length. Clusters of cottonwoods, willows and low shrubs hug the banks of this gulch and those of the other small drainages in the unit. Very widespread pinyons and junipers dot the area and aside from clumps of rabbit brush and sage, little other vegetation is present.

As is true of the other mesas in the area, the viewshed is very extensive and long range panoramic views of the surrounding landscape are available.

This landscape is very common within the area and is not very interesting from a scenic standpoint.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ / A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU 064

Final

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) EB, PG

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 065-Franklin Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 27

Time of Day 11:30 a.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: See High Mesa SQRU for narrative.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	0
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 9 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quali Classificatic

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU Fina

065

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) PG, EB

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 066-Shavano Valley

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 15,35,36
3 1

Time of Day 1:40 p.m.

Weather overcast -

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: Shavano Valley is a long, linear valley which runs north-south through the planning unit and doglegs to the southeast at its southern end.

The valley is bordered by Cushman Creek and Spring Creek Mesas to the west and east respectively, and it grades upward into California Mesa to the north.

The reddish walls of the mesas are very steep and sharply rising and they distinctly define the borders of the valley. Large angular boulders are strewn along the base of the mesa walls.

Agricultural land uses dominate the valley and the majority of the land is used for crop production and grazing. Pinyons and junipers form a sparse vegetative cover in unmanaged areas and are commonly found in association with wild grasses and brush. Several large groves of 50-75 foot cottonwoods surround the residences in the valley.

The steep slopes of the surrounding mesas screen out the adjacent scenery and thus the valley is enclosed and visually dominated by the agricultural uses it supports.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat valley
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	1-muted
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 8 = ____ / A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3
Class B 12-1
Class C 11 o

SQRU 066 Fina C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1-15-79

Planning Unit Cimarron

Evaluator(s) PG, EB

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 067-Dry Creek Canyon

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 3,4,9,12

Time of Day 9:50 a.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Canyon

General Narrative: Dry Creek Canyon ranges in width from less than a quarter of a mile in spots to as much as a half a mile or more. Its floor is very flat and even and is bisected by Dry Creek, a narrow, slowly flowing drainage course.

The canyon floor is bounded by vertical walls of layered sedimentary rock which rise roughly 100 feet. The strata are horizontally oriented and have eroded into rather blocky forms. In color, the rock is a uniform reddish-tan, stained black in places by weathering. Broken talus slopes join the base of the cliffs with the flat canyon floor.

Vegetation is limited along the steep exposed outcrop areas but along the canyon floor dense stands of cottonwoods and low shrubs are present, intermixed with rabbit brush and grasses.

The canyon walls effectively enclose the viewshed and the scenic influence of adjacent scenery is negligible.

No intrusions were noted in the canyon.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-steep canyon
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1-not prominent
4	Color	5	3	1	2
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU 067 Fina

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District _____ Date _____

Planning Unit _____ Evaluator(s) _____

Scenic Quality Rating Unit _____

Film: Roll # _____ Frame # _____ Time of Day _____

Weather _____

Landscape Character _____

General Narrative: _____

_____

_____

_

CIMARRON

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Transmission Line #1

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	1	0

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	1	M	M	L	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 1 2 Frame # 33 12

Time of day 10:10 a Weather snowing

Evaluator MF, KVM, DS

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).
A major (500kV or larger) transmission line on 60' steel towers crosses the valley. Vegetation has been removed from beneath the transmission line corridor creating a straight-edged effect. The visual impact of the corridor could be modified by feathering the edges of the clearing.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

CIMARRON

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Transmission Line #2

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	0	9

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	2	M	M	L	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 2 Frame # 8

Time of day 1:15 p. Weather partly cloudy

Evaluator PG, EB

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).

This wooden pole H frame transmission line has varying degrees of dominance based upon viewer position. To reduce the contrast and dominance, planting vegetation around the towers would help reduce the impact somewhat. Due to the height of the towers there would still be some impact although it would be minor.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

CIMARRON

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Substation #3

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	6	4

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	3	M	M	H	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 2 Frame # 34

Time of day _____ Weather _____

Evaluator PG, EB

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).

This substation dominates on a site specific basis, and when compared to the total rating unit has a minor impact upon scenic quality. Vegetative plantings would help screen this station and would greatly reduce the visual impact on a site specific basis.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

CIMARRON

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Radio Towers - 4

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	1	1

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	4	L	M	L	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

FILM: Roll # 3 Frame # 9

Time of day _____ Weather _____

Evaluator ME, KVM, DS

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).

The radio towers atop this mesa are not dominant within the rating unit. They do have different degrees of dominance depending upon lighting conditions. Probability is low that anything will be done to reduce the minor visual impact of these facilities.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

CIMARRON

1. Name or Type of Cultural Modification Water Pipe - 5

2. Legal Description and/or U. T. M. Coordinates

3. Unit Resource Analysis III Data:

1	1	2	2	2	3	3	3
					0	1	5

4	5	5	5	6	7	8	
3	0	0	5	H	M	L	

1. District
2. Planning Unit
3. Scenic Quality Rating Unit
4. Type
5. Number
6. Feature Contrast Score
7. Potential for Rehabilitation
8. Potential for Success

FILM: Roll # 4 Frame # 17

Time of day 11:00 a Weather sunny

Evaluator MF, DS

Type
(4) 1 - land and/or water
2 - vegetation
3 - structure

Feature Contrast Score
(6) L - Indicates the contrast can be seen, but does not attract attention.
M - The contrast begins to dominate.
H - Demand attention, will not be overlooked.

Rehabilitation Potential
(7) M - modification
E - elimination

Potential for Success
(8) H - Fairly certain contract can be satisfactorily reduced to meet low contrast.
M - Difficult to accurately evaluate success, but chances look promising to meet low contrast.
L - Probability is low that a change will be made, or success would be limited to meet low contrast.

4. Effect on Scenic Quality (Describe how cultural modification enhances or detracts from scenic quality as is reflected in its rating in key factor chart (Illustration 4).

This water pipe atop Cerro Summit is a dominant focal point for those who travel Route 50. Much like a gateway over the pass, it demands attention due to its size (3' diameter) and bright silver color. This intrusion is site specific and by no means affects the scenic quality of the entire rating unit. Painting the pipe would help to reduce the sharp color contrast to the landscape.

FIELD FORM FOR MODIFICATION INVENTORY

TABLE 3

USE VOLUME DATA SUMMARY
(Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area)

KEY OBSERVATION POINT	LOCATION	VOLUME
U.S. Hwy. 50	--	High
U.S. Hwy. 550	--	High
State Rte. 23	--	Moderate
State Rte. 62	--	High
State Rte. 65	--	High
State Rte. 90	--	Moderate
State Rte. 92	--	High
State Rte. 347	--	Moderate
State Rte. 348	--	High
Escalante Creek Rd.	U.S. 50 South	High
Twentyfive Mesa Rd.	U.S. 50 West	Moderate
Peach Valley Rd.	U.S. 50 South	Moderate
Black Canyon Rd.	State Rte. 92 West	Moderate
Cimarron Ditch Rd.	U.S. 50 South	High
Dave Wood Rd.	State Rte. 90 South	High
Broman Canyon Rd.	Colona to State Rte. 92	Moderate
Cow Creek Rd.	U.S. 550 East to National Forest	High

Visual Sensitivity - Use Volume

TABLE 3

USE VOLUME DATA SUMMARY
(Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area)

KEY OBSERVATION POINT	LOCATION	VOLUME
U.S. Hwy. 50	--	High
U.S. Hwy. 550	--	High
State Rte. 23	--	Moderate
State Rte. 62	--	High
State Rte. 65	--	High
State Rte. 90	--	Moderate
State Rte. 92	--	High
State Rte. 347	--	Moderate
State Rte. 348	--	High
Escalante Creek Rd.	U.S. 50 South	High
Twenty-five Mesa Rd.	U.S. 50 West	Moderate
Peach Valley Rd.	U.S. 50 South	Moderate
Black Canyon Rd.	State Rte. 92 West	Moderate
Cimarron Ditch Rd.	U.S. 50 South	High
Cove Wood Rd.	State Rte. 90 South	High
Broman Canyon Rd.	Cedone to State Rte. 92	Moderate
Cow Creek Rd.	U.S. 550 East to National Forest	High

Visual Sensitivity - User Attitudes

Two workshops were held in the Uncompahgre Resource Area to assess user attitudes toward visual change. The first was held in Delta on March 22 at 9:30 a.m. in the County Extension Office and the second was held the following day at 9:30 a.m. in the County Court House Annex in Montrose. User response to change was sought for the Cimarron, Escalante and Gunnison Gorge Planning Units at both workshops.

In total, 27 rating forms were submitted of which 26 were considered valid and used in the analysis. Those submitting forms, represented the following user interests: utility (4), mining (2), agriculture (2), conservation (3), special interest group or self (6), agencies (9) -- of which 6 were from federal agencies. A list of those individuals attending and/or participating in the workshop is listed in Table 5.

The Uncompahgre Basin RA was subdivided into 25 rating units. At the follow-up meeting with the Area Manager and members of his staff it was decided that rating unit #2, Broken Pinyon-Juniper should be subdivided into two areas for the following reasons. First, the participant responses were equally divided between moderate and high ratings and secondly, unit #2 was already in three separated blocks of land. Two of these blocks bordered the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument which would likely account for the high participant responses while the other was nearly identical in character but was several miles from the Monument. The areas bordering the Monument were designated rating units #2a and given a rating of High while the other unit retained the unit #2 and was given a rating of Moderate.

Of the 26 final rating units then, 7 were rated High, 14 were rated Moderate and 5 were rated Low after tabulation and analysis. A meeting was held with Mr. Don Lofvedt Area Manager, and Mr. John Sturzer, District Landscape Architect to review results and aid in the data analysis. It was the feeling of Mr. Lotvedt that the participants at the two workshop sessions represented a good cross-section of the user public.

High ratings were given to the following rating units: #1 Aspen-Conifer Slopes, #2a Broken Pinyon-Juniper (bordering the National Monument), #10 East Gunnison River Canyon, #11 West Gunnison River Canyon, #12 Black Canyon (the Gunnison River Canyon north and south of the Monument), #15 Escalante and Dominquez Creeks, and #25 Sheep Knob.

Although over 25 percent of the rating units resulted in a High rating, these units account for only about 10 percent of the land area in the Resource Area. The landscape character of these units range widely from timber covered slopes in the high country bordering the Forest Service, to the lowland arid, red rock canyons; and from pinyon-juniper upland near the Black Canyon of the Gunnison to winding river corridors in the valleys. The land ranges from dramatic to pastoral but the common characteristic seems to be their relatively natural setting with man's influence secondary if noticeable at all.

Somewhat over 50 percent of the units were given Moderate ratings. These units however, account for well over 50 percent of the actual land area. Two primary types of landscapes characterize the Moderate rating units. These are sloping pinyon-juniper lands and pastoral/agrarian landscapes. The largest single

unit is contained in rating unit #5, sloping pinyon-juniper, which accounts for essentially all the lands to the west of Montrose except Escalante, Dominquez, and Roubideau Creeks.

The Moderate ratings seem appropriate for these landscapes which could be typified as general natural or agrarian but not dramatic. Two Moderate units however, seem somewhat out of context with this characterization being more scenic and natural. These are units #20, Cow Creek, and #18, Smith Fork/ Red Canyon.

Low ratings were given to about 20 percent of the rating units which, together, account for closer to 30 percent of the land area. Low ratings generally were given to either areas which are intensively formed or the "adobes" or badlands in rating units #8 and 9.

Ratings are summarized in Table 4 and a complete set of summary analysis forms are located at the end of this section. Following the summary and analysis forms are the participant narratives regarding issues or projects of concern to them.

TABLE 4

SUMMARY RESULTS OF THE UNCOMPAHGRE BASIN RESOURCE AREA VISUAL SENSITIVITY WORKSHOPS

Unit No.	Unit Name	Final Rating	Desired Mgmt. Class	LF-1 a	LF-1 b	LF-2	LF/V-1	LF/V-2	V	V/ST
1	Aspen-Conifer Slopes	H	H	H	H	M	H	H/M	H	H/M
2	Broken Pinyon Juniper	M	H/M	H/M	H/M	M	M	H/M	H/M	H/M
2a	Broken Pinyon Juniper	H	H/M	H/M	H/M	M	M	H/M	H/M	H/M
3	Rolling Oak Pasture	M	M	M	M	M/L	M	M	L	M/L
4	Miller Mesa	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
5	Sloping Pinyon Juniper	M	M	H/M	H/M	M	M	M	H/M	M
6	Mixed Agrarian	L	L	M	M	L	M/L	M	L	M
7	Parks	M	M	H/M	H/M	M/L	M	M	M	M
8	Badlands	L	M/L	L	L	L	M/L	L	L	M/L
9	Rolling Hills	L	M	M/L	M/L	L	M/L	M	L	M/L
10	E. Gunnison River Canyon	H	H/M	H	H	H	M	H/M	H	H/M
11	W. Gunnison River Canyon	H	H	H	H/M	H/M	H/M	H	H	H
12	Black Canyon	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H	H
13	Open River Valleys	M	M	M	M	M	L	M	L	M
14	Upper Uncompahgre River	M	H/M	H	H	M	M	M	H/M	H/M
15	Escalante Dominquez Cr.	H	H/M	H	M	H	H/M	M	M	H/M
16	Tongue Creek	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
17	Currant/Leroux Creek	M	M	H/M	M	M	M	M	M	M
18	Smith Fork/Red Canyon	M	H/M	H/M	M	M	M	M	M	M
19	Onion/Maher Valleys	M	M	M	M	M	M/L	M/L	M	M
20	Cow Creek	M	H/M	H/M	H/M	M	H/M	M	M	H/M
21	Pleasant Valley	M	M	H	M	M	M	M	M	M
22	Roubideau Creek	M	M	H/M	M	M/L	M	M	M	M
23	Orchards	L	M/L	H/M	M	M	L	M	M	M
24	Mixed Agrarian	L	M/L	M	M	M/L	M/L	M/L	M/L	M
25	Sheep Knob	H	H/M	H	H	H/M	H/M	H	H	H/M

Final Visual Sensitivity

The Resource Area was nearly evenly split between overall High and Moderate Visual Sensitivity ratings. Only one small area of Low Sensitivity resulted where Moderate use volume combined with Low user attitudes. This was in Shavano Valley.

Most of the lands rated High for use volume since most of the lands are open to view from major highways, while most of the land rated Moderate user concern. Where these two values overlap an overall High Visual Sensitivity rating will result. Moderate overall ratings were largely the result of either Moderate user attitude ratings occurring jointly with Moderate use volume or Moderate user attitude ratings occurring with Low use volume (e.g. seldom seen zones).

Distance Zones

Because of the relatively large number of roads in the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area, something over two-thirds of the land is seen within 3-5 miles of primary use areas and has therefore been classified as Foreground-Middleground. Much of this land is along major highways through open agricultural land, however several major roads lead into the more scenic and natural landscapes outlying the agricultural basin (see Table 3). The integrity of the Foreground-Middleground zone along these roads would be more sensitive to visual change because of their more natural condition.

Less than one-third of the land in the Resource Area is in the Background zone. When they occur, these lands are primarily the elevated, sloping forested lands adjacent to U.S. Forest Service. Their character makes them highly visible when disturbed, however the more dominant mountain peaks above them make them more of a background reference than a focal point.

Approximately 10 percent of the land is in the seldom-seen zone. These lands occur primarily in the narrow, minor canyons of tributaries to the Uncompahgre and Gunnison Rivers.

Uncompahgre Basin RA
Montrose District

GUNNISON GORGE PLANNING UNIT

General Setting

The Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit (PU) is situated northeast of the Cimarron Planning Unit and east of the Escalante Planning Unit. Bordered by these two planning units, Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit encompasses 317,000 acres, and makes up the northeastern segment to the Uncompahgre Basin Resource Area.

This unit generally consists of a series of mesas which are located throughout the unit. Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit is relatively uniform in nature, with the exception of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument. This canyon is the most outstanding landscape feature within the entire Resource Area. Other landscape character types found within this planning unit include major river valleys, rolling hills, mountains, and badlands (adobes). Although this unit contains a variety of landscape types, it is dominated by mesas.

This unit lies entirely within the Colorado Plateau physiographic province which is composed of young to mature canyoned plateaus. The Black Canyon of the Gunnison generally bisects the unit in a northwest-southeast orientation. This canyon separates an area of uniform mesas in the northeast from the more diverse badlands and ridges of the canyon which lie to the southwest.

The Badland environments extend north out of the Cimarron Planning Unit and are composed of the same Mancos Shale formations. These badland areas are located northeast of Montrose below the dramatic ridges and upper slopes to the Black Canyon.

Sloping up out of the Badlands, the upper slopes appear mountainous when viewed from the Uncompahgre River Valley. This landscape has been dramatically uplifted. Vegetation consists of pinyon juniper, scrub oak associations primarily where reliefs and rock outcrops allow.

While this uplifting was taking place, the Gunnison River cut through this landscape and created the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. As a result, this mountainous landscape is in actuality a ridge and side slope to the canyon itself.

This mountainous landscape or ridge is a backdrop to the Uncompahgre Basin and as such serves as a visual terminus and focal point when viewed throughout the basin floor.

The Black Canyon varies from 1000 to 2700 feet in depth. This narrow canyon with sheer vertical rock walls displays a variety of geologic formations as well as the history of the entire area. It is a spectacular canyon due to its depth and length, being approximately 40 miles long.

In contrast to the more diverse lands southwest of the canyon, the lands to the northeast of the canyon are composed of a series of uniformly sloping mesas. These mesas which include Fruitland, Scenic, and Grand View Mesa are independent from one another. Originally these mesas were part of one extensive landform which was uplifted. The Smith Fork and Red Canyon drainage patterns which developed within this uniform landscape created channels perpendicular to the uplifting slopes. The result is a series of mesas separated by deeply incised canyons.

The dominant vegetation cover of these mesas is solid stands of pinyon junipers. Little diversity occurs within these uniformly sloping areas. The remaining mesas within the unit lie on the northern boundary. These are Redlands Mesa, and Rogers Mesa. In contrast to other mesas, these are primarily orchard and agricultural lands.

The flat agricultural lands of California and East Mesa extend north out of the Cimarron Planning Unit into the northeastern corner of the planning unit. Orchard City, an incorporated community, is descriptive of the land uses within this area.

Major drainages within the unit include the Gunnison River, and its tributaries the Smith Fork, North Fork, and Red Canyon. LeRoux and Currant Creeks along with a number of irrigation ditches are the remaining water features within this planning unit.

Vegetation as noted earlier is primarily pinyon-juniper scrub oak associations intermixed by grasses and sages on the less suitable slopes and lands for agriculture. Aspens and evergreens are situated on the higher slopes on the eastern boundary as well as on Poverty Mesa. These areas add variety to the uniform pinyon juniper mesas. Cottonwoods and willows are the dominant vegetative species in the wetter areas and valley bottoms.

There are only a few major traveled routes within the unit. These include Route 92 which runs east-west connecting Delta and Orchard City to Hotchkiss located on the northeastern boundary. At Hotchkiss Route 92 turns south to the

small community of Crawford and continues through Onion Valley to the Monument. Two entrances to the Black Canyon exist north and south of the canyon itself. These receive heavy use during summer months but are generally closed during the winter months. Route 65 branches off of Route 92 south of Orchard City and runs north to the Grand Mesa National Forest. Orchard City is not a population center such as Delta, rather it is an incorporated agricultural community.

TABLE 1

SQRU GENERAL LANDSCAPE TYPES & SUMMARY
PLANNING UNIT: GUNNISON GORGE

GENERAL TYPE KEY

Mountains	MT	Rolling Hills	RH
Ridges and Narrow Valleys	R&NV	Broad Valleys	BV
Canyons	C	River Valley	RV
Parks	P	Basin	B
Mesas	M	Reservoirs	R
		Badlands	B

SQRU NO.	NAME	GENERAL TYPE
011	Dry Cedar Creek Hills	Badlands
015	Coal Hill	Rolling Hills
016	Bostwick Park	Park
017	Cedar Creek	Narrow Valley
018	Poverty Mesa	Mesa
019a	North Rim Black Canyon	Mountains to Canyon
019	Black Canyon	Canyon
020	Squaw Creek	Narrow Valley
021	Poverty Mesa Sideslope	Mesa Sideslope
022	Crystal Creek	Broad Valley - Rolling Hills
023	Castle Rock	Mountains - Rolling Hills
024	Onion Valley	Broad Valley
025	Fruitland Mesa	Mesa
026	Maher	Broad Valley
027	Crawford Reservoir	Reservoir
028	Red Canyon	Canyon
029	Scenic Mesa	Mesa
030	North Fork	River Valley/Canyon
031	Peach Valley Foothills	Rolling Hills
032	Red Rock	Mountains
033	Below Red Rocks	Narrow Valley
034	Redlands Mesa	Mesa
035	Rogers Mesa	Mesa
036	Sulphur Gulch	Rolling Hills
037	Lawhead Valley	Valley/Rolling Hills
038	Leroux Creek	Narrow Valley
039	Antelope Hill	Rolling Hill
040	Orchard City	Broad Valley
043	Tongue Creek	Narrow Valley
048	Harts Basin	Broad Valley/Reservoir
051	Currant Creek	Narrow Valley
052	Gunnison River Valley	River Valley
060	North Uncompahgre River	River Valley
061	California Mesa	Mesa/Basin
062	East Mesa	Mesa/Basin

TABLE 2

DISTRICT: MONTROSE

RESOURCE AREA: UNCOMPAGHRE BASIN

PLANNING UNIT: GUNNISON GORGE

SQRU NO.	NAME	RATING CRITERIA LF	V	W	C	AS	S	CM	TOTAL NO.	SQR
011	Dry Cedar Crk Hills	3	1	0	1	2	1	2	10	C
015	Coal Hill	2	3	0	3	1	1	2	12	B
016	Bostwick Park	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	10	C
017	Cedar Creek	2	2	2	3	0	1	1	11	C
018	Poverty Mesa	3	3	0	3	3	1	2	15	B
019	Black Canyon	5	2	5	5	0	6	2	25	A
019a	North Rim Black Ca.	3	3	1	2	3	1	2	15	B
020	Squaw Creek	2	3	2	3	1	1	2	15	B
021	Poverty Mesa Sideslope	4	2	0	3	1	1	2	13	B
022	Crystal Creek	2	3	1	3	2	1	1	12	B
023	Castle Rock	3	2	0	2	2	1	2	12	B
024	Onion Valley	1	2	4	2	3	1	1	15	B
025	Fruitland Mesa	2	1	0	1	3	1	2	10	C
026	Maher	1	2	1	2	3	1	1	11	C
027	Crawford Res.	1	1	5	4	3	5	2	21	A
028	Red Canyon	3	3	3	4	0	1	2	16	B
029	Scenic Mesa	2	1	0	1	3	1	2	10	C
030	North Fork	3	3	5	4	0	4	2	21	A
031	Peach Valley Fthls.	2	1	0	1	3	1	2	10	C
032	Red Rocks	3	3	1	2	2	1	2	14	B
033	Below Red Rocks	3	1	1	2	3	1	2	12	B
034	Redlands Mesa	1	2	0	2	3	1	2	11	C
035	Rogers Mesa	1	3	0	3	2	1	1	11	C
036	Sulphur Gulch	2	1	0	3	1	1	2	9	C
037	Lawhead Valley	1	1	0	1	2	1	2	8	C
038	Leroux Creek	2	3	1	2	0	1	1	10	C
039	Antelope Hill	2	2	0	3	2	1	1	11	C
040	Orchard City	1	3	3	3	2	1	-3	10	C
043	Tongue Creek	2	4	3	4	1	2	2	18	B
048	Harts Basin	1	2	5	3	1	2	2	16	B
051	Currant Creek	2	2	2	1	0	1	1	9	C
052	Gunnison Riv. Va.	1	3	4	3	1	4	0	16	B
060	N. Uncompahgre R.	1	3	4	1	2	1	1	13	B
061	California Mesa	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	11	C
062	East Mesa	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	11	C

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

Two rating units within the Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit, 019 Black Canyon and 027, Crawford Reservoir have been identified as potential Areas of Environmental Concern (ACEC) by virtue of the fact that they represent Class A scenery and have received a rating of 5 in regard to their relative scarcity within the region.

These rating units represent areas of extraordinary scenic quality and require special management attention to insure preservation of the qualities which make them exceptional.

The rating criteria for these units appear below.

SQRU NO.	NAME	RATING CRITERIA LF	V	W	C	AS	S	CM	TOTAL NO.	SQR
019	Black Canyon	5	2	5	5	0	6	2	25	A
027	Crawford Res.	1	1	5	4	3	5	2	21	A

019 - Black Canyon - The Black Canyon of the Gunnison is the most outstanding feature in all the Uncompahgre Resource Area. The canyon is approximately 20 miles long and is characterized by nearly vertical side walls which drop 1000 to 2700 feet. Geologic features are displayed throughout the canyon sidewalls. The Gunnison River which bisects the canyon contains many falls and rapids throughout. Overall the canyon is spectacular, awsome, and undisturbed.

027 - Crawford Reservoir - Crawford Reservoir is the largest single water body within the unit. Surrounded by mountains, the unit appears to be heavily

used in the summer months. Recreation activities provided by the Reservoir are limited within the Planning Unit. With its natural setting and recreational opportunities, the unit is scenic and important due to its heavy summer use.

District Montrose

Date 1/16/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) KVM, MF,

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 011-Dry Cedar Creek Hills

Film: Roll # 1 Frame # 33,35
2 23,24
3 4,6,7,9,14,15,16,19
4 1

Time of Day 10:00 a.

Weather Overcast with so

Landscape Character: Badlands

General Narrative:

This unit appears to contain a loose soil, probably well-drained and dry, from the sparse vegetation present and the lack of trees. Grass appears dominant, weedy forbs are present, and it would appear to suit snakes and small rodents.

The hills themselves are irregular to a large degree in both size and shape; some hills are conical, others loaf shaped, still others are angular and/or sloping. Elevations range from 6000' to 7000'.

Within this unit a large irrigation canal has been constructed generally north-south. Several drainage areas, including "Dry Cedar Creek", have cut generally northeast to southwest channels but have little water for visual impact.

Views of adjacent areas are good. The area is natural but common.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1-little
3	Water	5	3	0	0-little
4	Color	5	3	1	1-little contrast
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quo Classificat

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

SQRU Fir

011

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 015-Coal Hill

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 11,12,15,16,17
5 6

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny, snow cover

Landscape Character: Coal Hill (rolling hills)

General Narrative: This rating unit consists of gentle slopes with smooth to slightly rolling topography. These slopes represent an intergradation between the upper hills and mountains and the lower knolls and valleys.

Vegetative cover consists of an extensive shrubby overstory (primarily Scrub Oak) which increases slightly in density along the very shallow drainages. A few pinyon and juniper are scattered throughout.

There are no distinctive landmarks or cultural intrusions.* Neither is there any remarkable geological or topographical feature. If there is any water it would be in the form of small intermittent streams which form as the snow melts.

Adjacent scenery consists of the rugged San Juans in the distance and the broad valley around Montrose below. Views are panoramic and add somewhat to the scenic quality of this area.

Color change is seasonal and the extensiveness of the scrub oak canopy surely adds visual variety in autumn.

* Small influence of a transmission line crossing the unit.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling hills
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-2 types
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-San Juans
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-3
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 015 Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 016-Bostwick Park

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 6,7,11

Time of Day 10:15 a.

Weather sunny, snow cover

Landscape Character: Park

General Narrative: Bostwick Park is a flat open expanse which forms a transition zone between the upper mountain slopes covered with pinyon juniper and the lower rolling, sparsely vegetated hills.

These parks lack overstory vegetation and appear to have been cleared of natural vegetation either for grazing or for cultivation.

Fence posts, a few telephone poles and farmhouses are present along with a paved road, dirt roads and irrigation ditches which criss-cross the parks.

There are some peripheral stands of pinyon-juniper where the upper slopes adjoin the park and along the outer park edge where the land drops abruptly to the hills below. These parks are somewhat similar in form to the mesa tops which were cleared for agricultural purposes.

Some visual interest is created by the rugged San Juans in the distance and by the seasonal change in color as snow covered land is plowed, seeded and the crop harvested in fall.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1-cultivated
3	Water	5	3	0	1-irrigated ditches
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-distant mountains
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-agri. country
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-roads, houses

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

SQRU Fin

016

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 017-Cedar Creek

Film: Roll # 3 Frame # 5
4 13,14

Time of Day 11:30 a.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: Cedar Creek winds through a narrow valley which begins belo Cerro Summit and which opens below into a broad valley east of Montrose.

South-facing slopes consist of the toes of smaller rolling hills which support open stands of pinyon and juniper with minimal understory. The valley bottom supports a shrubby growth composed of willows, greasewood and some sagebrush. The stream is narrow and deeply incised in the sandy bottom. The north-facing slopes consist of fine-textured soils which in places form short, crumbly ledges or cliffs 2-3 feet in height. Vegetation consists of a low scrubby cover of grasses, forbs and minor shrubs.

Since the valley is narrow and relatively deep the view is confined and only occasionally are the hills and mountains beyond visible.

This valley offers a little visual interest apart from some seasonal change in color. Visual quality is reduced further by the presence of Highway 50 which runs adjacent to the stream the full length of the valley. Steep cuts in the roadside banks have not been reclaimed or naturally revegetated. These appear as unattractive scars which detract from the viewing pleasure.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-steeper walls to S
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	2
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	0-confined
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	+1 road and banks

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11

Scenic Qual Classificati

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11 o

SQRU Fin

017

A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 018-Poverty Mesa

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 8,9,10
5 1,3,4,5,7

Time of Day 4:30 p.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Like most other mesas in this planning unit Poverty Mesa is an upland area with slightly rolling topography. To the north and east the mesa drops off into Black Canyon. To the south and west Poverty Mesa drops into Bostwick Park. The location of the mesa above the lower hills, parks and valleys and below the higher mountains provides for a panoramic view of adjacent scenery.

Vegetative cover consists of extensive groves of aspen with lesser groupings of pine. In some areas aspen and pine cover gives way to small, open park-like areas of grassland and scrub oak.

No streams or bodies of water are evident on the mesa. Color variation is derived primarily from the seasonal change in aspen and shrub leaves. At various points along the edge of the mesa a few large, red rock outcrops are visible.

The only cultural modifications visible from the observation point are three antenna (radio towers). These are barely visible and do not detract from the visual experience.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3- 3 types
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none seen
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-panorama
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 15 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or l

SQRU ↓ 015 Final ↓ B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 019-Black Canyon

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 2
9 17-24

Time of Day 4:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Canyon

General Narrative: The Black Canyon of the Gunnison is the most outstanding feature in all of the Uncompahgre Resource Area. The canyon runs southeast to northwest for approximately 20 miles before turning north for another 10 miles. Characterized by nearly vertical, angular side walls dropping 1000' to 2700' at its greatest relief to the Gunnison River bisecting the canyon. A variety of geologic features are displayed throughout all levels of the canyon sidewalls. Massive rock outcrops, pinnacles, rock spires are typical of the canyon and are most pronounced in the areas of the canyon with the greatest vertical relief. It is an outstanding natural feature unique to this part of Colorado.

Vegetation consists primarily of pines and scrub oak where slopes and relief are not as great, these areas are primarily at the north and south ends of the canyon. The middle sections of the canyon (being the areas of the greatest vertical relief) are too steep to support any vegetation.

The Gunnison River bisects the canyon and contains many falls and rapids within the very narrow valley floor. The canyon is very natural and left undisturbed. Beyond words of any description, the canyon can be summed up in two words - spectacular and awsome.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	5
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	5
4	Color	5	3	1	5
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	6
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 25 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 019 Final A

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 019a-North Rim Black Canyon

Film: Roll # 9 Frame # 25 Time of Day

Weather

Landscape Character: Mountains to the canyon

General Narrative: This rating consists of the upper slopes north of the Black Canyon. These slopes are bordered by Fruitland Mesa in the north and by the Black Canyon to the south.

These slopes are fiarly dramatic, though uniform in appearance. At the bottom of the slopes, the land form falls dramatically to the Gunnison River below. There are few rock outcrops in comparison to the Black Canyon.

Vegetation is dominated by pinyon juniper associations, with intermittent pockets of scrub oak as the understory. This vegetation ends as the slopes fall to the Black Canyon, and where rock outcrops are dominant.

Water is not a dominant element, although its influence has caused many steep drainages.

Color is fairly constant throughout and is primarily dark greens and seasonal reds, and rusts of the scrub oak.

Modifications are limited to a road system for viewing the canyon below and ranger stations. These do not impair the scenic quality, and as a result the area appears natural and interesting.

Views are panoramic towards the top of slopes. Views into the canyon itself are limited and would be seen at the rim of the slopes where the land falls away to Gunnison River.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-dramatic/uniform
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-some diversity
3	Water	5	3	0	1-site specific
4	Color	5	3	1	2-little diversity
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-limited at the rim
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 019a

Final B

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 15 = ____ A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 020-Squaw Creek

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 20,21

Time of Day 11:00 a.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: This unit is located in the eastern portion of the Cimarron and Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit. Though termed a narrow valley, it lacks a definite valley floor. Rather it is a "V" shaped unit defined by moderate ot steeply sloping sidewalls. Curvilinear in nature, it offers a variety of spatial experiences to those who travel Route 50 which bisects the unit and is located in the valley bottom.

The sideslopes are covered with a variety of vegetative species consisting of some evergreens, scrub oak and scattered pinyon pine. The narrow floor contains cottonwoods and some willows which follow the curvilinear Squaw Creek, an intermittent stream.

Views are primarily contained within the unit, although in some sections dramatic views of the rocky side slope of Poverty Mesa are present.

Colors are intense in fall with many yellows, golds and greens but are seasonal in nature. No modifications exist other than Route 50. As a result the area appears natural and is visually interesting.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling, undulating
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-variety
3	Water	5	3	0	2-intermittent (dominant)
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-Poverty Mesa
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 15 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Qua Classificati

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

SQRU Fin

020

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 021-Poverty Mesa sideslope

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 18,19,20

Time of Day 11:45 a.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: Mesa (sideslope - steep)

General Narrative: This rating unit consists of the south-facing sideslopes of Poverty Mesa just above Squaw Creek. These slopes are relatively steep and rise approximately 1000' above the creek bottom.

Large blocks of exposed volcanic rock jut up from the slopes to form dramatic red outcrops. These rocks are a pleasant contrast to the brown soils, scattered grey-green shrubs and isolated dark green pines.

The only water present on the slopes consist of a few trickles of runoff from melting snow.

Viewed from along Highway 50 in the valley below this sideslope is visually pleasing with its eye-catching rock outcrops and high vertical relief. Apart from the valley itself, plays a small role in the overall scenic quality.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	4-dramatic relief
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-scattered
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal, rocks
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-valley and mtns.
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-not scarce
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 13 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A	19-33
Class B	12-18
Class C	11 or

SQRU 021 Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 022-Crystal Creek

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 23, 24

Time of Day 3:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Broad Valley/Rolling Hills

General Narrative: Crystal Valley is situated in the eastern corner of the Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit. Running northeast to southwest, this valley is about 1-1/2 miles wide and 4 miles long. It gently slopes down on both sides to Crystal Creek which bisects the unit. There are no outstanding landform features within the unit.

Vegetation consists of extensive groves of aspen where the land has not been cleared for grazing purposes. Cottonwoods extend in finger-like projections down from the steeper sideslopes of the valley located just outside the planning unit.

A few ranches are situated within this valley and are not a dominant focal points. One transmission line crosses the unit and does not detract from the scenic quality of the unit. Views extend to the nearby steeper hills and the rocky outcrop of Cathedral Peak which rises over 1000 feet above the valley floor.

The area apepars quite natural and would offer a great display of color in the fall and spring. Though fiarly typical in this region it is visually interesting due to contrasting textures and colors.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-gently rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-extensive aspens
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-Cathedral Peak
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-transmission line

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 022 Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 023-Castle Rock

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 25,26,28,29,30, 36,37

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Mountains/Rolling Hills

General Narrative: This unit is composed of low mountains which form a transition zone between the higher peaks and mountains above and the smaller knolls at the edge of the valley below. These intermediate mountains are composed of rounded ridges, gentle slopes and an occasional short v-shaped valley.

Near the northern end of the unit, vegetation consists primarily of pinyon and some juniper. Steeper hillsides are nearly barren. Towards the southern end, shrub species tend to dominate the landscape and trees become less frequent in occurrence. On the higher slopes of the unit aspen groves increase in density with rise in elevation and eventually change into the thick groves of the mountains beyond. Seasonal change of aspen leaf color lends interest to the area.

No cultural intrusions are apparent in this unit. No permanent or dominant bodies of water are evident.

The higher mountains beyond the unit dominate these lower hills although they are not uncommon or possess exceedingly striking characteristics. These lower hills are not unusual or uncommon in this planning unit.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-pine, aspen
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 023 Final

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 024-Onion Valley

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 27,29,30,31,34

Time of Day 4:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Broad Valley

General Narrative: Along the northeastern edge of Fruitland Mesa, Onion Creek flows through a broad, nearly level valley that slopes very slightly to the northeast. To the east of the valley Cathedral Peak and adjoining mountains arise behind gently rolling foothills. Short series of small barren knolls appear periodically along the valley edge just below the foothills.

Vegetation consists of sagebrush and willow stands intermingled with a few pines and junipers. A few mature cottonwoods are scattered along the valley bottom near the stream course. Some of the lowland in the valley has been cleared for planting of hay or wheat while still other areas are used for cattle pasture. Seasonal color variation is present although not a dominant factor.

Some homes and outbuildings are present in the valley as well as Gould Reservoi which covers approximately 1/2 of the section. The reservoir has no distinctive features although it probably serves as a refuge or resting place for water fowl.

A transmission line corridor travels the length of the valley but does not form a major intrusion since the towers are not easily seen.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	4-reservoir, stream
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-Castle Rock
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-transmission line

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 15 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A	19-33
Class B	12-18
Class C	11 or

SQRU ↓ 024 Final ↓ B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/7/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 025-Fruitland Mesa

Film: Roll # 4 Frame # 32,33,35
5 21,22,27
9 26

Time of Day 4:00 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Fruitland Mesa is bounded on the north by the Smith Fork River and by Onion Valley to the east and drops into Gunnison Gorge Monument on the southwest. This is a large expanse of upland which has a slightly rolling topography and which slopes slightly to the north.

Vegetation consists of a fairly uniform cover of pinyon juniper with a grass understory. There appears to be minimal variation in the plant communities. Some of the natural vegetation has been removed for agriculture proposes.

Water, when present is a very minor part of the visual experience. Color variety is limited to shades of green, some brown from the soil and the blue of the sky.

The position of the mesa above the lower valleys provides for a panoramic view of adjacent scenery. Catherdral Peak, Landsend Peak and other lesser mountains can be seen in the distance.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-little diversity
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	1-mute tones
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-adjacent mtns.
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 025 Final

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	5-little diversity
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	1-minute tones
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-adjacent mtns.
6	Scarcity	5	3	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-3	-3-none

Subtotal _____ + _____ + _____ = Total _____ ÷ 10 _____ = _____ A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 026-Maher

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 8,9

Time of Day 9:00 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Broad Valley

General Narrative: This unit is a broad valley situated east of Fruitland Mesa and below Landsend and Saddle Peaks to north and east. Primarily gently rolling in nature, the valley contains finger-like projections of unstratified sedimentary formations 100 feet in height that extend from the area to the east (unit 023). One small mound is seen in the middle of the valley just west of Maher, a small community consisting of one post office.

The valley is primarily used for grazing, and as such has little natural vegetation. What vegetation there is consists of isolated patches of pinyon juniper associations.

Muddy Creek, Alkali and Irn Creeks drain the valley but are relatively insignificant. Pinyon juniper associations follow these curvilinear stream courses as well as a few isolated cottonwoods. Views are panoramic to the north and east. Views of the surrounding Landsend and Saddle Peaks, along with Castle Rock add to the scenic quality of this relatively uninteresting valley.

One transmission line crosses the valley and detracts from the scenic quality somewhat, but is not a major intrusion.

The area in general is relatively uninteresting and owes much to the surrounding adjacent scenery.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-gently rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-minor diversity
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal, but minor
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-surrounding peaks
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-transmission line

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU ↓ 026

Final ↓ 6

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 027-Crawford Reservoir

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 10-15

Time of Day 10:30 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Reservoir

General Narrative: Crawford Reservoir is a comparatively large body of water situated along the western edge of Maher Valley. Small hills covered with juniper forest abutt the reservoir on its western side. On all other sides the landscape is slightly rolling and slopes slightly upward along the valley floor. Vegetation along these sides consists of a few immature cottonwoods and scattered pines pasture and cropland fill the valley beyond. Waterfowl and wildlife probably utilize the reservoir seasonally.

The size of the reservoir and the presence of latrines and picnic tables suggest that the area is used for fishing, picnicking and small craft boating during favorable weather.

The mountains and hills in the distance provide interesting scenery to be enjoyed while visiting the site.

Other small reservoirs are present in this area but are insignificant in comparison to the extent of Crawford Reservoir.

Color contrast is provided by warm brown soil, bluish-green junipers, blue sky and the changing texture of the reflective water.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1-little
3	Water	5	3	0	5-large
4	Color	5	3	1	4-variable
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-partially confined
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	5-this size not common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-outhouses, tables

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 21 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 027

Final A

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 028-Red Canyon

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 16,19,20,23

Time of Day 12:00 noon

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Canyon

General Narrative: Red Canyon and Smith Fork Canyon both traverse east-west and terminate at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison to the west. Both canyons disect and break the continuity of Fruitland Mesa, a large , uplifted, gently sloping mesa. These canyons have steeply sloping sidewalls dropping 400 to 800' to relatively flat valley floors. Typically north aspects are sloping in a regular or uniform pattern, where southern aspects have massive vertical rock outcrops with talus slopes beneath.

Distinct sedimentary layers display many colors from reds to greys to tans on these southern aspects. Cottonwoods, willows and other water oriented species follow the curvilinear patter of both rivers disecting the canyon views are totally enclosed throughout these units. No major intrusions are located within these areas. The major land use is grazing in the fertile valley floor. The area appears quite natural and is visually interesting.

Vegetation occurs with aspects. North facing slopes are moderately covered with pinyon-juniper associations, while southern aspects have little if any vegetative cover.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-steep canyons
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	3-seasonal dominence
4	Color	5	3	1	4
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 16 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A	19-33
Class B	12-18
Class C	11 or L

SQRU	Final R
028	B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 029-Scenic Mesa

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 17,18,27
9 26

Time of Day 12:00 noon

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Very similar in formation to Fruitland Mesa. Scenic Mesa is an upland area of pinyon-juniper woodland. However Scenic Mesa does not reach the height or extent of Fruitland Mesa. Nor is the pinyon juniper vegetation as extensive as on Fruitland Mesa.

Instead much of Scenic Mesa has been treated to remove the natural vegetation and much of the land has been given over to grazing, pasture or cropland.

For further detail please see 025 writeup.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1
3	Water	5	3	0	0
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33
Class B 12-18
Class C 11 or

SQRU 029

Final C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 030-North Fork

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 24,30

Time of Day 12:30 p.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: River Valley/Canyon

General Narrative: This unit is made up of the North Fork of the Gunnison which flows east to west and the Gunnison River as it flows north out of the Black Canyon.

These two rivers have carved through the landscape creating a canyon which varies in depth from 300 to 600 feet.

The eastern section is cut by the North Fork - the sidewalls are moderately to steeply sloping with intermediate benches between dramatic drops. As the Gunnison River joins the North Fork, the canyon is deeper but still has moderate to steep sidewalls. Rock outcrops along with sandstone formations are common throughout.

The entire river meanders through this landscape and is a dominant scenic element. The valley pattern varies in width, with extremely narrow sections and wider along the insides of curves in the river.

Vegetation is sparse on the hillsides and consists of pinyon juniper, while the valley floor contains cottonwoods, willows, and other aquatic species.

Views are enclosed totally except at the ends of the canyon environment. There are no intrusions which maintains an appearance of naturalness and ruggedness to the canyon.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-diverse
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-variety but not extensive
3	Water	5	3	0	5-dominant
4	Color	5	3	1	4
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	4-not as dramatic as other areas 030
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 21 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 or

SQRU Final

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/10/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 031-Peach Valley Foothills

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 34,36
8 5,6,11

Time of Day 4:00 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: Rolling Hills

General Narrative: Above Peach Valley a series of low rolling foothills rises to the east. These hills appear to form an unlifted area tilting down into the valley and traveling its length. Shallow drainages lie nearly parallel to each other and give the hills an appearance of slightly irregular corrugated paper.

This rolling topography is covered by a pinyon juniper woodland and open areas of shrub and grass. Juniper woodlands dense near the hilltops, open up further down the slopes gradually giving way to grass and shrub vegetation common to valley lands. The short shallow drainages support thicker juniper stands throughout their length.

Red sandstone outcrops occur near the southern end of the unit.

No outstanding cultural modifications are present in the unit.

It should be noted that low adobe hills precede the foothills. The foothills do not grade directly into the valley floor. A panoramic view of mountains and valleys can be seen from the foothills.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	2-red/green
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 031

Final C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 032-Red Rock

Film: Roll # 8 Frame # 12,13

Landscape Character:

Date 3/10/79

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Time of Day 4:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Mountains

General Narrative: These mountains slope to south and west from the rim top of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison. These sideslopes are moderate to steeply sloping and contain a few massive rock outcrops at the crest or ridge top of the unit. With elevations from 7800' sloping to 6400', these slopes are dominant elements when seen from the valley floor.

They are covered primarily with solid stands of pinyon juniper associations and have little apparent diversity. Some scattered scrub oak are the understory, but are not visually evident from any far distance.

Colors are generally solid dark greens. Red rock outcrops contrast to the vegetation and break up the dominance of the vegetation.

Views are quite extensive to the south, west, and north from the sideslopes. Atop the crest of this area, views of the magnificant Black Canyon are common.

No intrusions exist, and as such the rugged, natural appearance is kept intact.

A few creeks drain the area but are not noticeable.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3-steep
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-minor diversity
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	2-Red Rocks
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 14 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quo Classificat

Class A 19-

Class B 12-

Class C 11

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032

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/10/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF. DS.

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 033 Below Red Rocks

Film: Roll # Unable to Photograph

Time of Day 4:00 pm

Frame #

Weather sunny

Landscape Character:

Narrow Valley

General Narrative: This unit is situated below the Red Rocks of unit 032. Characterized as a narrow valley, this area is one of the drainages for the upper slopes or ridge to the Black Canyon.

Serving as a transitionary landform between the upper slopes and the badlands to the southwest, this area contains similar elements of both landscapes. It contains some badland areas which are eroded and unvegetated, while the northeastern segments of the unit beyond the stream coarse are less disected and contain small, isolated stands of pinyon/ juniper.

The stream coarse bisecting the unit is well defined due to the narrow distinct sidewalls which have been eroded in the past. The stream is intermitt and would have varying degrees of dominance throughout the seasons. Vistas are pimarily focal views of the upper slopes to the Black Canyon ridge. Outside influences upon the scenic quality are positive due to the contrasts in vegetation, color, and topography.of these adjacent landforms. Overall the is not outstanding, but does contain a variety of landscape elements.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	3 broken
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1 limited
3	Water	5	3	0	1 intermittent
4	Color	5	3	1	2 contrasting
5	Influence	5	3	0	2 focal views
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1 common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2 none

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or Les

SQRU	Final Rat
0 3 3	B

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 12 = ____ (A, B, or C)

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FORM

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 034-Redlands Mesa

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 31,32,33

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny, clear

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Mesas are a common landform in the Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit and Redlands Mesa is similar in most respects to the other large mesas of the unit. Nearly level on top with very slightly rolling sideslopes the mesa provides a high vantage point for viewing the valley below and the mountains beyond. Along its southern edge the sideslopes of Redlands Mesa descend onto the top of yet another small benchlike mesa called Shamrock Mesa.

Vegetation varies between natural stands of pinyon juniper woodland and open, cultivated fields. A few fruit orchards have been established on the mesa top. Sheep and cattle graze in pastures on the top and sideslopes. Side slope drainages and some undisturbed parklike areas on top support dense stand of tall Big Sagebrush. Cottonwoods occur near the widely scattered homesteads and farms.

No bodies of water are evident on the mesa. Cultural intrusions consist of only powerlines servicing the various residences. Color contrast is seasonal and associated with orchards or other agricultural practices.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-minor sideslopes
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	3-panoramic
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-farms only

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 034

Final C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 035-Rogers Mesa

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 25,26,29

Time of Day 3:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: Rogers Mesa situated in the northeastern corner of the Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit is typical of many areas throughout this region. This mesa gently slopes to the south and terminates at the North Fork River. There are no outstanding landform features throughout this area although it does have some panoramic views to the south and east.

It is dominated by extensive orchards, the primary land use on this upland area. Cottonwoods and few pinyon pine are situated in areas where land has not been cleared for the dominant land use.

Few intermittent creeks drain the mesa and are not a dominant feature in this landscape.

Adjacent scenery, as noted before, is panoramic to the south, with views of the extensive Fruitland Mesa, and to the east with views of the higher mountainous areas.

The area has been extensively modified in terms of vegetation, though remains natural in landform elements. Visually it is common and uninteresting. Colors in the fall from the orchards will greatly enhance the unit, but only on a seasonal basis.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-uniform
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-extensive orchards
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-orchards

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 035 Final C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 036-Sulphur Gulch

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 36
6 2,3

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Rolling Hills

General Narrative: This unit consists of a series of rolling hills that are highly disected due to their unstratified sedimentary nature. Most slopes are highly weathered sideslopes of shamrock mesa in the north. Angular and disected, interesting shadows of contrast highlight and accentuate the topography of this unit. Some of these hills are rounded and gently sloping while other areas are fairly rugged, particularly where the slopes fall away from Shamrock Mesa.

Vegetation is dominantly grassland. No trees or shrubs are located within the area. Water courses are not dominant and as such appear to blend in with the topography of the unit.

Colors and shades constantly change through the day. Reds, light browns, yellows, greys and golds highlight these hills and combined with the topography are the areas most interesting features.

Views are panormaic to the east, west, and shorter durations to the south. These add somewhat to the scenic quality of the unit. No major intrusions exist, and thus the area appears natural.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rolling
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1
3	Water	5	3	0	0
4	Color	5	3	1	3
5	Influence	5	3	0	1
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 9 = ____
A, B, or C

Scenic Qual
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Class A 19-3
Class B 12-
Class C 11 o

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036

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 037-Lawhead Valley

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 35
6 1

Time of Day 10:00 a.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Valley/Rolling Hills

General Narrative: This unit is situated below Redlands Mesa in the north and above the Gunnison River in the south. It appears as a small elevated valley, as well as a series of very gently rolling hills. There are no outstanding features within the unit.

Vegetation is dominantly grasslands. No trees exist within the unit. It is much like unit 036 to the east without the highly dissected hills characteristic of that area.

Views are panoramic in most directions and add to the scenic quality of this uninteresting area.

No water features or intrusions are located within the unit. As such the area appears fairly natural. The major use of the area is grazing and does not affect the scenic quality by disturbing soils or changing natural vegetation.

As with unit 035 and 036 Route 92 bisects the unit as it traverses east-west from Hotchkiss to Delta.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	1
3	Water	5	3	0	0
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	2
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 8 = ____

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 or

SQRU 037 Final C

A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	
3	Water	5	3	0	
4	Color	5	3	1	
5	Influence	5	3	0	
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	

District Montrose

Date 3/8/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 038-Leroux Creek

Film: Roll # 5 Frame # 28

Time of Day 4:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: Leroux Creek is a small creek bisecting Rogers Mesa and Burrow Mesa. With moderate sloping sidewalls and a narrow valley floor, Leroux Creek is not a dominant element in the region. This creek flows north to south emptying into the North Fork just west of the community of Hotchkiss.

Pinyon pine-juniper associations are dominant in the sideslope while cottonwoods, willows and scrub oak follow the curvilinear stream course.

Views are enclosed and are not visually interesting. A few residences are located atop the sidewalls, otherwise major intrusions located in the unit consist of a junkyard supported by the hilltop residences. This intrusion is localized and would have a more substantial impact if located within the valley floow. As it is, it does not affect the scenic quality greatly due to its location atop the sideslope. Overall, the area is not exceptional in scenic quality even though it appears fairly natural.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1-seasonal
4	Color	5	3	1	2-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-junkyard

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 038

Final ____

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge & Escalante

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 039-Antelope Hill

Film: Roll # 6 Frame # 4,11,12,14

Time of Day 1:00 P.M.

Weather sunny, clear

Landscape Character:

Hill

-includes Cedar Mesa Extensio

General Narrative: The southern extension of Cedar Mesa is quite similar to Antelope Hill. Both rise about 400; above the valley which contains Orchard City. These hills are rounded in form with moderately sloping sides. Some areas along the sideslopes have been moderately to severely eroded where weaker rock has given way. These eroded areas support little if any vegetation.

Sagebrush grasses and minor shrubs covered the remaining hillsides. Cottonwoods and extensive orchards are present atop Antelope Hill. A small transmission line corridor runs the length of Antelope Hill in a southward direction. A fruit stand and houses are present.

From the top of the unit rolling hills can be seen beyond broad valleys. Grand Mesa can be seen to the west. Aspen-covered mountains can be seen in panoramic view on all other sides.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2-rounded hill
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-trees are few
3	Water	5	3	0	0-none
4	Color	5	3	1	3-orchards
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-Grand Mesa, Valleys
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1-transmission line

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or Le

SQRU	Final Ra
039	C

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ (A, B, or C)

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FORM

District Montrose

Date March 9, 1979

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge & Escalante

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 040-Orchard City

Film: Roll # 6 Frame # 5, 15-20,24

Time of Day 12:30 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character:

Valley

General Narrative: Orchard City is an incorporated area filling the lower end of a broad valley bounded on the south by the Gunnison River, by Antelope Hill on the east and by the mesas and hills on the west which form an intermediate zone between the valley and Grand Mesa.

The valley has been totally given over to various agricultural practices including pasture, hayfields and orchards. Homes and ranches are scattered throughout the valley. Two rural communities (Orchard City and Cedaridge) have small business districts and associated residential areas.

Surface Creek, a tributary of the Gunnison River bissects the valley. Cottonwood groves line the main course of the creek. Towards the north the valley narrows and native scrub oak vegetation replaces cultivated fields and pastures.

Above the valley, aspen-covered slopes can be seen to the north. Grand Mesa looms in the distance to the west above lower mesas and hills.

Cultural intrusions, apart from the developed communities consist of a construction company gravel pit, several trailer parks, a power company substation and transmission lines and poles.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-valley
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-cultive & some natural
3	Water	5	3	0	3-Surface Creek
4	Color	5	3	1	3-orchards, mtns, trees
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-Grand Mesa
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-many broad valleys
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	-3-highly developed

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A	19-33
Class B	12-18
Class C	11 or L

SQRU ↓ 040

Final R ↓ C

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 10 = ____ A, B, or C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FORM

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Escalante

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 043-Tongue Creek

Film: Roll # 6 Frame # 25-29

Time of Day 5:00 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: Kiser and Sand Creeks join with Oak Creek to form Tongue Creek in a wide, flat valley. Dobe hills and the sideslopes of small mesas form the moderately sloping walls of the valley.

Flat and well supplied with water the valley floor has been cultivated for production of hay and pasturage. Cottonwood groves and willow thickets appear at irregular intervals along the bottom and cluster around homesteads. Patches of natural vegetation (Greasewood, Rabbitbrush and Sage) are interspersed between cultivated areas. The sideslopes of mesas to the east are covered with shrubs (primarily sage) and grasses. A few junipers are scattered at their bases. The dobe hills on the western side form a pleasing contrast because the grey and gold soils can be clearly seen through the sparse cover of salt-tolerant, low-growing plants. This wide variety of vegetation makes the area interesting and provides color and texture contrast.

Flowing water can be seen periodically throughout the length of the unit. No major cultural intrusions are apparent.

Grand Mesa can be seen rising to the west. Aspen covered slopes stretch to the north. Broad valleys and distant hills can be seen at the mouth of the valley.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	4-5 types
3	Water	5	3	0	3
4	Color	5	3	1	4
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-partially confined
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	2
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 18 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or L

SQRU	Final R
043	B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FORM

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Escalante/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 048-Harts Basin

Film: Roll # 6 Frame # 13, 14

Time of Day 3:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Broad Valley

General Narrative: This valley is an extension of Orchard Valley situated to the west. It is separated somewhat from Orchard Valley by a linear ridge extension of Cedar Mesa and by Antelope Hill (Unit 039). This valley is natural and has not been disturbed, and consequently is what Orchard Valley could have been like if it had not been so disturbed or intruded upon. It is enclosed on three sides by the edges of mesas and Antelope Hill.

Vegetation is dominantly grasslands, though some agriculture in the form of orchards does occur.

The dominant element in this area is Fruit Growers Reservoir, a substantial body of water. It is not a recreational area as such, and is probably used as the name implies.

It is largely natural and is a pleasant contrast to the Orchard Valley to the west.

See Unit (040) for further narrative on adjacent scenery.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-fewer orchards
3	Water	5	3	0	5
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-relatively confined
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	2-reservoir
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or L

SQRU	Final F
048	B

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 16 = ____ (A, B, or C)

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Escalante/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 048-Harts Basin

Film: Roll # 6 Frame # 13, 14

Time of Day 3:00 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Broad Valley

General Narrative: This valley is an extension of Orchard Valley situated to the west. It is separated somewhat from Orchard Valley by a linear ridge extension of Cedar Mesa and by Antelope Hill (Unit 039). This valley is natural and has not been disturbed, and consequently is what Orchard Valley could have been like if it had not been so disturbed or intruded upon. It is enclosed on three sides by the edges of mesas and Antelope Hill.

Vegetation is dominantly grasslands, though some agriculture in the form of orchards does occur.

The dominant element in this area is Fruit Growers Reservoir, a substantial body of water. It is not a recreational area as such, and is probably used as the name implies.

It is largely natural and is a pleasant contrast to the Orchard Valley to the west.

See Unit (040) for further narrative on adjacent scenery.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2-fewer orchards
3	Water	5	3	0	5
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-relatively confined
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	2-reservoir
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	2-none

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 16 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or L

SQRU 048

Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/9/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) MF, DS

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 051-Currant Creek

Film: Roll # 6 Frame # 21-23

Time of Day 3:30 p.m.

Weather sunny

Landscape Character: Narrow Valley

General Narrative: Currant Creek is situated in the northern part of the Gunnison Gorge Planning Unit. Flowing north to south it has cut between Antelope Hill and Redlands Mesa.

The valley itself is relatively narrow and somewhat curvilinear. Currant Creek is a meandering intermittent body of water which flows into the Gunnison River at the community of Austin.

The sideslopes of the valley rise approximately 300 feet from the valley floor and gently sloping down in a rolling pattern.

Vegetation consists primarily of scattered and isolated pinyon pine on the sidewalls, while willows, grasses and sagebrush follow the curvilinear stream course.

Views are enclosed, with the exception of looking south out of the valley.

One minor pipeline crosses the unit and affects the scenic quality minimally.

Although fairly natural the area is common and is visually not very interesting.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	2
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	2
3	Water	5	3	0	2-intermittent
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	0
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 9 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 051 Final C

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

District Montrose

Date 3/10/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge/Escalante

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 052-Gunnison River Valley

Film: Roll # 7 Frame # 35, 36
8 3,4

Time of Day 12:30 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: River Valley

General Narrative: Gunnison River Valley is a broad lowland area extending west of Delta, Colorado for about five miles and extending east on the other side of Delta to just south of Orchard City. The Gunnison River meanders through the valley toward the west.

Most of the valley has been cultivated or turned into pastureland. Homes and various commercial buildings dot the landscape. Bridges, irrigation canals, roads and telephone lines occur throughout the unit.

Cottonwoods and willows are common near homes or along the river course. Cattails are thick in low-lying wet areas. Apart from these plant communities and occasional patches of weeds or sagebrush little of the valley land supports native vegetation.

Grand Mesa and its foothills, the San Juans and other mountain groups encompass the viewing area although at a distance.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-cultivated
3	Water	5	3	0	4-Gunnison River
4	Color	5	3	1	3-seasonal
5	Influence	5	3	0	1-distant
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	4
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	0

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 16 = ____ (A, B, or C)

Scenic Quality Classification

Class A 19-33

Class B 12-18

Class C 11 or

SQRU 052

Final B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FOR

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 3/10/79

Planning Unit Gunnison Gorge/Escalante,Cimarron

Evaluator(s) DS, MF

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 060-Uncompahgre River

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 21, 26
8 8, 9

Time of Day 4:15 p.m.

Weather clear

Landscape Character: River Valley

General Narrative: This end of the Uncompahgre River Valley differs considerably from that described for unit 010. Urbanization is absent and the area has a more agricultural aspect. Homesteads and isolated commercial buildings do occur but are interspersed with open pasture and hayfields.

Natural vegetative cover is not extensive except along portions of the river where cottonwoods and other riparian vegetation is prevalent. Fields and pastures dominate the rest of the vegetative component.

The Denver & Rio Grande Western Railroad and State Highway 50 bisect the valley.

Distant mountains, mesas and hills add a panoramic view but only moderately enhance the visual quality.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-flat
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-riparian
3	Water	5	3	0	4-Uncompahgre River
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	2-distant
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1-common
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 13 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificatio

Class A 19-3
Class B 12-1
Class C 11 o

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060 B

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Escalante/Gunnison Gorge

Evaluator(s) PG, EB

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 061-California Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 6,7,8,10,11,14
21, 22
7 31, 32

Time of Day 10:15 a.m.

Weather Overcast

Landscape Character: Plateau

General Narrative: This SQRU is characterized by a flat to gently rolling mesa which is bounded to the southwest by Cushman Creek Mesa and by the Uncompahgre River corridor, High Mesa, and the Shavano Valley to the east. To the north and west, the mesa extends into the Escalante Planning Unit.

The overall character of this landscape is dull, it is very common within the region. The land is smooth and largely flat and though some topographic variation exists, it adds little to the unit's scenic quality.

The land has been put to agricultural use, and thus it is characterized by large, open expanses of pastureland, cropland, and several orchards. In unmanaged areas, the natural vegetation consists of willows and cottonwoods along small drainages, and rabbit brush, grasses and scattered deciduous trees in other areas. The composition of the vegetation is quite diverse.

The area's color composition is rather muted though autumn colors may add a bit of variety. Widely sweeping views of the nearby valleys, mesas, and mountains lend a feeling of openness and vastness to the unit and add appreciably to the visual character of the unit.

The agricultural land uses have modified the unit considerably but not in a negative fashion.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1-extensive flat mesa
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3-diverse
3	Water	5	3	0	1-present not not prominent
4	Color	5	3	1	1-muted
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____ A, B, or C

Scenic Quali Classificati

Class A 19-3

Class B 12-1

Class C 11 o

SQRU Finc

061

SCENIC QUALITY FIELD INVENTORY FO

District Montrose

Date 1/15/79

Planning Unit Cimarron/Gunnison Gorge/Escalante

Evaluator(s) EB, PG

Scenic Quality Rating Unit 062-East Mesa

Film: Roll # 2 Frame # 22,24
3 7,10,11
8 7

Time of Day 1:00 p.m.

Weather overcast

Landscape Character: Mesa

General Narrative: See California Mesa

Bounded on east by foothills and on west by Uncompahgre River corridor.

Score (Circle Appropriate Level)

		High	Medium	Low	Rationale or Explanation
1	Landform	5	3	1	1
2	Vegetation	5	3	1	3
3	Water	5	3	0	1
4	Color	5	3	1	1
5	Influence	5	3	0	3
6	Scarcity	6	2	1	1
7	Cultural Modification	2	0	-4	1

Subtotal ____ + ____ + ____ = Total 11 = ____

Scenic Qual
Classificati

Class A 19-
Class B 12-
Class C 11

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062

A, B, or C

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